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**Jesus, Jung, and the Charismatics: The Pecos Benedictines and Visions
of Religious Renewal**

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of Religious Renewal**

by

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Dedication

To all those who helped in the publication of this work (especially Bob Abzug and Ginny Burnett), but most especially my brother. Just like my undergraduate thesis, it will be more interesting than anything you ever write.

Abstract

Jesus, Jung, and the Charismatics: The Pecos Benedictines and Visions of Religious Renewal

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The Catholic Charismatic Renewal, though changing the face and feel of U.S. Catholicism, has received relatively little scholarly attention. Beginning in 1967 and peaking in the mid-1970s, the Renewal brought Pentecostal practices (speaking in tongues, faith healings, prophecy, etc.) into mainstream Catholicism. This thesis seeks to explore the Renewal on the national, regional, and individual level, with particular attention to lay and religious “covenant communities.” These groups of Catholics (and sometimes Protestants) devoted themselves to spreading Pentecostal practices amongst their brethren, sponsoring retreats, authoring pamphlets, and organizing conferences. With religious communities, especially, this was a controversial practice, causing tension amongst Catholic celibates and ultimately discouraging religious involvement. To promote something, however, is often to have very clear visions about what that thing should look like. The Renewal was no exception, as covenant communities like the Word of God (Ann Arbor, MI) and the People of Praise (South Bend, IN) endorsed a particularly rigid and authoritarian version of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Clerical groups, most notably the Pecos Benedictine Monastery, advanced a different vision of the Charismatic life. Their version of the Renewal, more heavily based on inner healing and (for Pecos at least)

Jungian psychology, was much looser and similar to other New Age spiritualities. At the core, those at Pecos believed in the redemption of man through Christ, whereas those in lay covenant communities tended to focus on the fall of Adam and original sin. These visions came into conflict in the structures and messages of the Renewal, which helped contribute to its decline in the 1980s and practical disappearance by the 1990s.

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CHAPTER 1: “IT SPLIT THE ABBEY RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE”: *VATICAN II AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL*

Something was stirring in the normally tranquil air of St. Benedict’s Monastery of Benet Lake, Wisconsin in the late 1960s. Perhaps it had blown in from elsewhere in the nation. The era, after all, was a time of profound conflict in the United States. High-profile assassinations had cut short the lives of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and Bobby Kennedy; race riots had rocked Los Angeles and other urban areas of the country; and police and FBI activities had openly quashed demonstrations by the Black Panthers, the Students for a Democratic Society, and even average university students. The monks of Benet Lake, however, were dealing with a different sort of conflict, one based on spiritual, rather than sociopolitical, concerns. New practices had emerged within the monastic enclosure, bringing new levels of excitement and enthusiasm to some and suspicion to others. Practitioners of the new rite defended their position vigorously. Prayer had become a truly personal experience, as had their relationship with Jesus Christ, explained Fr. Daniel Scully. “You feel that you have been plunged into God,” he related. “You sense God, you are aware of God. Not only with your mind but, somehow, with your entire being and he is just a reality to you as you are to yourself. How do you experience yourself?”¹ Such an

¹ Fr. Dan Scully, OSB, “Charismatic Renewal Pecos Tape 2,” undated, Box 1, True House (Charismatic community) Records, University of Notre Dame Archives [hereafter referred to as UNDA], Notre Dame, IN 46556

experience represented the fullness of the Christian faith, he and his fellow monks believed, and it was only possible through their unique style of worship.

While bringing these men to the heights of religious experience, these innovations brought some of their monastic brothers to the depths of despair. Many expressed their misgivings about what was happening within the walls of St. Benedict's. The worship was too emotional and too insistent, they claimed, leading to excessive proselytism of visitors and openly up its practitioners to psychological instability. Some openly protested this new emphasis. The Abbey's vocation director, Fr. Joseph, openly resigned his position in 1968. He attributed his actions to this new style of prayer, claiming that "[he] could not in good conscience advise candidates to join this monastery anymore."² To many in the community, therefore, these strange practices represented a perversion, and not perfection, of Christianity.

Such steadfastness presented the superior of the monastery, Abbot Andrew Garber, with a difficult decision. The men tending towards the new practices were some of his most energetic and faithful followers, but they were contributing greatly to a tension running through the monastery. "Obviously, division is not the work of God," Fr. Henry Nurre noted of the predicament a few years later. "Yet, just as obviously, good men were finding new depths of spiritual joy and peace."³ It was quite a predicament, one unique in Garber's tenure at Benet Lake. Such a problem, however, was not unique nationwide.

² Fr. Dan Scully, OSB, "Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake," October 1967-May 1968-1969, AJTC 29968, James T. Connelly Papers [hereafter referred to as JTC], UNDA.

³ "Two Currents," *Benet Lake News and Views*, Oct-Nov 1973

Superiors of the Jesuits, Franciscans, Poor Clares, Trappists, etc. confronted similar tensions within their own religious communities, all revolving around these strange new worship patterns of the 1960s and early 70s. Some community members became obsessed with them, even breaking cloister to attend prayer meetings; others became angered by them, threatening to leave religious life altogether if such practices continued. Such were the ways religious communities found themselves affected by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, a dynamic if divisive movement within post-conciliar Catholicism.

CHANGES AND EXPERIMENTS OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) signaled a dramatic shift within the local and global Catholic Church, both theologically and pastorally. Convened in Rome by Pope John XXIII under the pretense of *Aggiornamento* (literally, the opening of the windows), the Council looked to make Catholic doctrine more relevant to the modern world. Indeed, the assembled princes of the Church took radical steps towards this end, such as affirming the truths held in non-Christian religions, re-declaring Catholic concern for the material well-being of mankind, and affirming the value of secular sciences like sociology and psychology. More revolutionary still, this reform impulse had emerged from the center, and not the fringes, of the notoriously hierarchical Church.⁴ With ramifications still felt to this day, Vatican II was an enormous turning point within worldwide Catholicism.

⁴ Timothy Kelly, *The Transformation of American Catholicism: The Pittsburgh Laity and the Second Vatican Council, 1950-1972* (Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame, 2009), 222; Jay Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 425

One of the more surprising changes involved the Church's perception of the laity. The pre-conciliar stereotype, that laypeople could only be trusted to "pray, pay, and obey," seems to have been largely accurate, both from exterior and interior perspectives. Protestant observers had long critiqued the corporate, almost passive faith of Catholic worshippers. "Monasticism [and by extension, religious life as a whole] was represented as an individual achievement which the mass of the laity could not be expected to emulate," Dietrich Bonhoeffer railed in his 1937 classic *The Cost of Discipleship*. "By thus limiting the application of the commandments of Jesus to a restricted group of specialists," he continued, "the Church had evolved the fatal conception of the double standard—a maximum and a minimum standard of Christian obedience."⁵ Such charges were largely justified, as evidenced by the documents of the First Vatican Council (1870-1871). "The renewal of the moral life of the Christian," Catholic leaders declared, depended not on faith nor works nor even relationship to Christ, but rather on "a more accurate instruction...a more frequent reception of the sacraments...[and] a closer union...with the visible head [the Pope]."⁶ Holiness came from on high, trickling down to believers only through their devout obedience. Such passivity appeared most visibly in Vatican I's description of the Body of Christ. Envisioning the Roman Pontiff as the head, the Council endowed him with "the primacy of Peter over the whole Church." Only from this head, the theologians continued, could "the rights of sacred communion flow to all...[through] the structure of a

⁵ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 46-48

⁶ Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Vatican I, Session 3, April 1870, 3, accessed 10 August 2015 at <https://www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/V1.HTM#4>

single body.”⁷ Christian discipleship thus became linked to Christian unity, receptivity, and respect for Church authority.

Vatican II explicitly rejected such ideas of holiness. The Church tasked its clergy to work *with* the laity, not just on their behalf. “The classes and duties of life are many, but holiness is one,” it explained of the broader call to sanctity. “Every person must walk unhesitatingly according to his own personal gifts and duties in the path of living faith, which arouses hope and works through charity.”⁸ The Council’s portrayal of the Body of Christ reflected this changed view of the world. Christ, and not the Pope, served as the head; the entire Church, and not just the laity, came to represent the body. Such declarations reflected a new emphasis on individuality, and not uniformity. Rather than asking its followers to march behind the Church in theological lockstep, the Council celebrated the “diversity of graces, ministries, and works” that together were “building up the Body of Christ.”⁹ This reversal was just one of the many brought about by the Council. Other declarations encouraged experimentation in the formerly rigid Catholic Mass, as well as greater dialogue with Protestants and non-Christians.

The true impact of Vatican II, however, was more a product of its reception than its promulgation. By bringing change into a *seemingly* unchanging Church, the Council shook the confidence many Catholics had in their faith. There was an authoritative Church, one

⁷ First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, Vatican I, Session 4, 18 July 1870, 2.4

⁸ Light for Nations, *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II, Paul VI, 21 November 1964, 41, accessed 20 August 2015 at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html

⁹ *Ibid.*, 32

that promoted doctrine, not discussion, and stood fast to its traditions in the swirling currents of modern culture. “The intellectual equipment of priests, nuns and many college-educated Catholics included a core of tidy, self-confident religious certainties,” explained sociologist-priest Fr. Andrew Greeley.

Creed, code, and cult—what you believed, how you acted, what you did religiously—were all neatly and cleanly specified. You might not know all the rules, but your parish priest did or the Catholic Encyclopedia could provide the answers. Catholicism had the answers to everything—polished, succinct, understandable answers....Once meat on Friday was possible...the whole ball of wax melted.¹⁰

Theologian Karl Rahner characterized the post-Vatican II change similarly. Before the Council, he remembered, “The church was the object of an almost fanatical love, regarded as our natural home, sustaining and sheltering us in our spirituality...the church supported us; it did not need to be supported by us.” The three years of discussion and debate, however, had changed everything. “Today all this is different,” he explained,

We do not see the church so much as the *signum elevatum* in nations (‘the sign raised up before the nations’), as it was acclaimed at the First Vatican Council. What we now see is the poor church of sinners, the tent of the pilgrim people of God, pitched in the desert and shaken by all the storms of history, the church laboriously seeking its way into the future, groping and suffering many internal afflictions, striving over and over again to make sure of its faith; we are aware of a church of internal tensions and conflicts, we feel burdened in the church both by the reactionary callousness of the institutional factor and by the reckless modernism of some that threatens to squander the sacred heritage of faith and to destroy the memory of its historical experience.¹¹

¹⁰ Andrew Greeley, *Confessions of a Parish Priest* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986), 255

¹¹ As quoted by Fr. George Higgins in *Why I am a Priest: Thirty Success Stories*, edited by Lawrence Boadt, C.S.P., & Michael Hunt, C.S.P. (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 12.

With such reactions, it became clear that Vatican II had not only changed parts of the Church in itself, but also in the minds of its followers.

This shift prompted enthusiastic experimentation among Catholics in all states of life. Dubbed the “Spirit of Vatican II,” a new willingness to change and innovate became apparent all over the world, especially within the American Catholic Church. Catholic liturgy, or formalized worship, became a particularly popular target. The Council had, after all, encouraged greater lay participation in the Mass, recommending a greater appreciation of cultural rituals and use of vernacular (or non-Latin) language. U.S. liturgists, however, took this to an extreme. Excited by the possibility of any change, they opened up all parts of the Mass to re-imagination. They celebrated folk Masses, jazz Masses, and even Masses set to the beat of Brazilian Bossa-Nova. Latin disappeared almost entirely from the Church, as did Gregorian chant and the venerable organ. Guitars and tambourines took their place, as rank-and-file Catholics sought to bring the best of worldly entertainment into the heavenly banquet.¹² Further experimentation came about through liturgical dance, alternative wedding vows, and the like.¹³ These changes, far beyond those envisioned by Vatican II, spoke to a new sense of freedom and openness within the post-Conciliar Church.

¹² “Black Catholic Churches Are Mixing Jazz with Their Traditional Services,” *New York Times*, 6 Aug 1972; “University Mass Stresses a Sense of Community,” *The Heights*, 9 Sept 1969; “Catholic Teens Sing Mass with ‘Bossa Nova’ Beat,” *Chicago Defender*, 5 Nov 1966

¹³ “The New-Old Art of Liturgical Dance,” *NYT*, 3 Dec 1978; “St. Louis Catholics Try New Funeral Liturgy,” *The Washington Post*, 21 Aug 1966.

Local clergy and religious¹⁴ were often the most vocal proponents of such change. Many abandoned their religious garb, with men of the cloth ditching their cassocks and nuns getting rid of old habits. Patterns of prayer also shifted. Religious men and women deemphasized the communal and ritualistic aspects of worship and instead sought fulfillment in personal and emotional prayer. These and thousands of other adjustments revolutionized religious life, even down to the smallest detail. Gone were the elaborate system of bells signaling breakfast, morning prayer, lunch, study, recreation, etc., explained Jesuit priest Joseph Becker, as was the tradition of sit-down dining together in community. Seminarians took to living on their own, or in small apartment communities, spurning their massive seminaries and novice houses.¹⁵ Such shifts spoke to the excitement with which religious orders, as well, greeted the Second Vatican Council and its call for renewal.

These developments affected not just styles of life, but also styles of work. Priests, nuns, and brothers reexamined their traditional ministries in healthcare, education, foreign missions, etc., looking at how they might adapt them to better serve the needs of the world. Catholic education especially felt these changes. Looking to increase enrollment and secular prestige, male and female religious orders opened up teaching and administrative positions to qualified laypeople in their high schools, colleges, and universities. This

¹⁴ While there are clear distinctions between secular (diocesan priests) and religious (nuns, brothers, priests in consecrated orders) and clergy (priests), I use the term “religious” and “clergy” to encompass all those in Catholic celibate life.

¹⁵ Carole Garibaldi Rogers, *Habits of Change: An Oral History of American Nuns* (Oxford: Oxford U Press, 2011), 205; For more detail on these changes, see Joseph Becker, S.J., *The Re-formed Jesuits* (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1992)

policy change dramatically affected the composition of college faculties, so much so that the Jesuits had to adopt preferential hiring practices for their priests and brothers.¹⁶ Lay nurses and doctors likewise replaced Catholic nuns working in hospitals, as they had greater expertise in the field. Perhaps the most dramatic example involved Catholic campus ministry. Lay campus ministers took over religious instruction and evangelization at places like St. Louis University or Notre Dame, a change unthinkable before Vatican II. Without the sacramental responsibilities of priests, college officials rationalized, these qualified men and women would be able to devote more attention to properly forming Catholic youth.¹⁷ Thus, the 1960s and 70s saw a great shift in mission, as many communities took to abandoning their traditional activities as religious.

At the same time, however, secular clergy and religious threw themselves into new areas. Priests opted to live in the slums, hoping to more fully meet the needs of the faithful and in local communities.¹⁸ Mission work in South America most vividly illustrated this trend.¹⁹ Pre-conciliar priests focused on distributing the sacraments (Eucharist, Marriage,

¹⁶ Paul A. Fitzgerald, S.J. *The Governance of Jesuit Colleges in the United States, 1920-1970* (Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame Press, 1984)

¹⁷ Donald Sutton, S.J., "The Role of Campus Ministry in a Jesuit College or University," in *Jesuit Higher Education: Essays on an American Tradition of Excellence* edited by Rolando Bonachea (Pittsburgh, Duquesne U Press, 1989): 147-153

¹⁸ Becker, *The Re-formed Jesuits*, 92; "Church's Slum Experiment Ends in Dissent," *NYT*, 11 April 1972

¹⁹ On this subject, see Susan Fitzpatrick-Behrens, *The Marykoll Catholic Mission in Peru, 1943-1989: Transnational Faith and Transformation* (Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame Press, 2012); "From 'Rehabilitation' to 'Development': Latin America, 1959-1971," "A Time for Reassessment: Liberation Theology and the 'Option for the Poor,' 1965-1980," and "US Catholic Mission History: Themes and Trends, 1850-1980," in *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History* by Angelyn Dries (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998): 179-214, 215-246, 247-272; Phillip Berryman, *The Religious Roots of Rebellion: Christians in Central American Revolutions* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984). For critiques of the effectiveness of liberation theology, see John Burdick, *Looking for God in Brazil: The*

Reconciliation, Baptism) and the instruction of that faithful. Such spiritual services left little time for material improvement or even personal relationship. Articles in mission magazines speak to this earlier preoccupation, typically focusing on the dangers of superstition and immorality. “To many Indians,” one *Maryknoll* article exclaimed incredulously, “a cross is a divinity in itself, capable of seeing, thinking, hearing, even speaking!” Missionaries in El Salvador offered a similarly bleak assessment of their parishioners, blaming reprehensible behavior on poor religious instruction. “These long-abandoned people cannot be expected to have a high morality,” another reported of the Salvadoran people, noting that “it is not unusual for a man, after a few drinks, to take his machete and murder his woman and children.”²⁰ Talk of personal morality and periodic Mass filled such publications, testifying to what American Catholics truly valued in their mission work.

A completely different approach emerged after Vatican II, however. Many began linking material with spiritual concerns and talking of ministering to the entire person. Religious in Guatemala, for example, focused on “help[ing] people help themselves,” establishing schools, agricultural coops, and leadership programs in addition to providing religious instruction. Their account to *Maryknoll* affirmed the importance these physical needs. “If private segments of the Christian community do not undertake this work,” it

Progressive Catholic Church in Urban Brazil's Religious Arena (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).

²⁰ “Just a Tiller in the Garden: Relics of Mayan Superstition Still Permeate Guatemala” and ““El Salvador: First Report: Maryknoll Begins Work in Another Central American Nation,” *Maryknoll*, Feb 1962, 20-23, 54-55.

reasoned, “it is doubtful that anyone else will.” The missionaries cast their work starkly. “We are faced with this twofold mission in Guatemala. We must teach people the alphabet and the doctrines of Christ. We have to give people bread and the sacred host. We have to save people, not only souls.²¹ Inspired by the burgeoning idea of liberation theology, religious began seeing themselves as more than just the dispensers of Sacraments or educators of the faithful, but rather genuine forces for social and political change. These provided yet another example of the experimentation that was taking place in the apostolates of religious life in the years after Vatican II.

This religious enthusiasm for change stemmed from three interconnected causes. Obedience played a large role, as the Vatican had expressly asked religious to reexamine their ways of life and worship. Pope Pius XII had invited religious congregations to a period of introspection at the 1950 Sacred Congregation for Religious (the governing body of all Catholic orders). He worried that obsolete laws, particularly those involving strict cloister and dress, might limit the effectiveness of religious missions. For this reason, he asked the orders to reexamine their constitutions and styles of life.²² Vatican II had touched on similar themes. The document *Perfectae Caritas* (or Perfect Charity) had reiterated Pius XII’s plea, urging religious to “adjust to the conditions of the times.” This could be accomplished, the document continued, by returning to “the sources of all Christian life and to the original inspiration behind [their] community,” most importantly the founder.

²¹ “Save People, Not Only Souls,” *Maryknoll*, Dec 1974, 4-8

²² Patricia Wittberg, *The Rise and Fall of Catholic Religious Orders: A Social Movement Perspective* (Albany, NY: State U of New York, 1994), 210

The only way forward was backwards, the Council explained, as renewed attention to Benedict of Nursia and Ignatius of Loyola could help modern day Benedictines and Jesuits most fully live out their purpose within the Body of Christ.²³

Besides these hierarchical orders, religious were responding to their diminished status within the Church. Vatican II had disrupted the pre-Conciliar hierarchy of Catholic spirituality. Religious, through their commitments to chastity, poverty, and obedience, were assumed to have the inside track on holiness. Emboldened by their sacrifice, religious felt largely assured of their own salvation, or at the very least comforted based on their position above the laity. Vatican II undercut this security. By raising the status of the laity, it had introduced a profound sense of doubt into the religious vocation. Religious began to wonder, quite openly, what it was that truly made them distinct from laypeople.²⁴ Jesuit priest David Knight spoke eloquently to these concerns in an article for the *Review for Religious*, a publication circulated amongst a variety of Catholic orders. “A concrete problem today is the ‘difference’ between religious and secular life,” he began. All too often, he explained, religious communities leaned back on the old standbys, telling themselves and others “that religious life is different just by being more dedicated, more prayerful, more evangelical, in short, just by being ‘more perfect’ than lives lived without religious vows.” Such a description, however, did celibate brothers and sisters no good in

²³ Perfect Charity, *Perfectae Caritas*, Vatican II, Paul VI, 28 October 1965, 2, 15-18, accessed 20 August 2015, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_perfectae-caritatis_en.html

²⁴ Agnes Cunningham, “Appropriate Renewal and Ecclesial Identity,” in *The Future of the Religious Life*, Peter Huizing and William Basset, eds. (New York: Seabury, 1974): 89-95; Wittberg, *The Rise and Fall of Catholic Religious Orders*, 214

the post-conciliar world. “Religious are hard put,” Knight noted,” to find any differences between themselves and laymen that doesn’t simply begin with ‘more.’”²⁵ These questions of meaning and identity applied particularly to the issue of celibacy. “If celibacy is nothing but being unmarried for the sake of apostolic service, then deep personal loneliness will be its universal characteristic,” the priest stated bluntly.²⁶ Though eventually concluding in favor of religious life, such an article spoke to the widespread soul-searching and lack of certainty affecting religious brothers and sisters in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Vatican II had, after all, seemingly usurped their privileged place in the Catholic sphere. Religious had held temporal, as well as spiritual, power in the pre-conciliar Church. Parishioners used to look upon their priests as “the ‘man for all seasons’; the expert in all things from pulpit to politics,” Fr. Walter Burghardt recalled in 1990.²⁷ As the most educated and most spiritual member of the community, this was often true in the years before the 1950s. Changing patterns of Catholic life, however, in addition to the shift in spiritual understanding, had reduced the temporal status of religious. “The rest of [a priest’s] existence [outside of Eucharist or confession]-- administration, schools, hospitals, preaching, spiritual direction,” Burghardt continued, “is lived with the suspicion that some man or woman in the pews could do it better.”²⁸ The growing presence of laypeople in religious work in education, missions, and hospitals exacerbated these insecurities. Nuns,

²⁵ David Knight, S.J., “Spousal Commitment in Religious Life,” *Review for Religious* 32.1, 1973: 85-96

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Boadt & Hunt, *Why I am a Priest*, 123

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 123-124; Andrew Greeley, *Priests in the United States: Reflections on a Survey* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972), 159

priests, and brothers thus came to question not only their commitment to religious life, but also to religious mission.

These doubts contributed to the post-conciliar malaise amongst religious orders. Outsiders commented freely on the anxiety of the post-conciliar era, seeing it at the root of many of the changes advocated by Catholic religious. Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg criticized the zealotry with which Catholic clergy approached the world. “The men of religion will find the world soon enough,” he warned the men of St. Meinrad’s seminary in Indiana, “for it beats insistently on everybody.” Hertzberg invited his Catholic brothers to more deeply examine their motivations, particularly what they hoped to achieve by greater contact with laypeople.

The question remains: what will they bring to the world out of the transforming power of their faith....Religions and the world are, by their very nature, in tension. The urges to contemplation and action are the reflections of this tension in the lives of men....Moses was not always in the midst of affairs in the camp of the Jews. He was most useful to them and most transforming of them after he had ascended Mount Sinai and was alone with God for 40 days. With such comments, the rabbi urged the men of St. Meinrad’s to approach the world with caution, never forgetting to ground themselves “amidst a worshipping community.”²⁹ Fr. Andrew Greeley spoke of a similar restiveness amongst Catholic celibates. He lamented the “foolish experimentation” of seminary rectors moving their students closer to secular universities, often for no reason beyond “instinct or passing fashion.” “We’ve got to do something,” explained one of his priestly friends of his decision. “Nobody here can tolerate

²⁹ John Tracy Ellis, “The Formation of the American Priest: An Historical Perspective,” 3-110, ed. by John Tracy Ellis, *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Historical Investigations* (Collegeville, MN: Saint John’s, 1971).

all the confusion.”³⁰ Even members of the general public could sense something brewing within religious life. “At one time,” *Time* magazine observed, “when you were seeking an answer, you’d find a Jesuit. Today, when you are looking for a question, you find a Jesuit.”³¹ In this way, Vatican II led to something of an identity crisis for Catholic nuns, priests, and brothers, as they began questioning both their state in life and the work appropriate to it.

This atmosphere, unsurprisingly, prompted a mass exodus from Catholic religious life. While there had been ebbs and flows of Catholic vocations throughout American history, this was something else entirely. The U.S. Jesuits lost 10,000 men alone in the ten years following the Council, reducing their numbers from 36,000 to 26,000. Approximately 8000 diocesan priests left during the same time period, as did 70,000 nuns from 1962 to 1988.³² Overall, therefore, there was a massive demographic shift away from religious life.

Religious saw several factors underlying these decisions. Some believed it the fulfillment of the Vatican Council, part of their reevaluation of religious life on the whole. The Council had, after all, urged them to rethink their rules regarding cloister and clothing. Why not celibacy, obedience, and poverty too? many wondered. “Sure, I live like a middle-

³⁰ Greeley, *Priests in the United States*, 30

³¹ "The Jesuits' Search For a New Identity" *Time*, 101:17 (April 23, 1973)

³² Thomas Rausch, S.J., *Radical Christian Communities* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990), 141-144; Richard Schoenherr and Andrew Greeley, “Role Commitment Processes and the American Catholic Priesthood,” *American Sociological Review*, 39:3 (June 1974): 407-426; For a popular account of the crisis, see “Priests and Nuns: Going Their Way.” *Time*, 95:8 (February 23, 1970). These changes were worldwide, but particularly pronounced in the United States

class person,” one explained of his decision to live luxuriously. “Why not? I work in a middle-class parish and the people want me to be like this. So I enjoy the material things I have for the sake of the apostolate.”³³ If some clergy were willing to rethink poverty, even more eagerly contemplated the abandonment of celibacy. Most religious cited a desire for marriage as their primary motivation for *laicization* (or re-becoming part of the laity). And marry they did. Popular culture of the 1960s and 70s resounded with the stories of ex-priests coupling up with ex-nuns, or ex-confessors and confessees. This desire for marriage, explained Fr. Andrew Greeley, spoke to something beyond just the appeal of companionship. Marriage served as a conduit for generalized discontent, a solution latched on to by those frustrated by non-celibate aspects of religious life. Purposelessness in work or friction with community thus contributed to these marriage rates, as religious looked to relationships as a silver bullet for the rest of their problems.³⁴ Together, these desires and dissatisfactions contributed to a massive drop in the numbers of U.S. Catholic religious.

Mass resignation affected religious recruitment, as well. Young men and women hesitated to commit themselves to lifelong promises in the wake of Vatican II. Jesuit seminaries, used to welcoming over 350 new recruits each year during the 1950s, were lucky to bring in one hundred by the late 1960s.³⁵ Other orders and seminaries suffered, but none as greatly as groups of religious women. Just over 30,000 women joined

³³ Gerald Arbuckle, S.M., *Out of Chaos: Refounding Religious Congregations* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 81

³⁴ Greeley, *Priests in the United States*, 165

³⁵ "The Jesuits' Search For a New Identity"; Joseph Fichter, *America's Forgotten Priests: What They Are Saying* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 80.

American Catholic religious life from 1958-62, and just under 10,000 from 1966-1970. By 1976-1980, these numbers had diminished even further, barely reaching 2500.³⁶ Such lackluster recruitment took on even more significance when coupled with resignations. From 1968-1974, for example, the rate of men joining diocesan seminaries barely exceeded the rate of men leaving the active priesthood. Nationally, bishops gained a net of twenty-five and thirty-eight priests in 1971 and 1972. When coupled with the natural attrition that took place in seminary and the graying population of existing priests, this painted a dark picture indeed for the future of the Catholic Church.³⁷ “Since we will have no ordinations to the priesthood until June 1979,” one bishop announced facetiously in his pastoral bulletin, “no priests of the diocese may die until then. This is an order.”³⁸ Such dark humor speaks to the seriousness of the situation confronting many in religious life, further encouraging soul searching amongst Catholic celibates.

The twin processes of resignation and under-recruitment further discouraged people from joining religious life. Men and women who joined religious orders normally did so because of their positive experiences with the priest in the parish or the nun in the schoolroom. These people seemed purposeful and driven in what they did, and they actively (and sometimes aggressively) encouraged vocations to the religious life. This

³⁶ Helen Rose Ruchs Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister: Organizational Decline in Catholic Religious Orders in the United States* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 47

³⁷ Schoenherr, Richard A., Lawrence A. Young, and Tsan-Yuang Cheng. *Full Pews and Empty Altars: Demographics of the Priest Shortage in United States Catholic Dioceses* (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 207

³⁸ “Catholic Church: A Changed Role,” *The Washington Post*, 7 May 1978

“vocation culture” faltered in the wake of Vatican II. For one, the laity had less contact with religious. As priests and nuns disappeared from their traditional places in hospitals and schools, the chances of appreciating their style of life greatly diminished. Popular impressions of religious commitment likewise suffered. Paralyzed by “the uncertainty of the present times in the priesthood,” elder priests were hesitant to recommend their way of life to others around them.³⁹ “I could not in conscience encourage any young man to enter the seminary and the priesthood,” one reported to Fr. Joseph Fichter. “It seems to me that he could do more good for others in social work or teaching.”⁴⁰ This sense of confusion and instability, therefore, exacerbated the growing isolation of priests and nuns. With few to model the life and even fewer to model it joyfully, religious vocations declined precipitously.

These trends affected even those satisfied with religious life. Objectively, there was little cause for alarm. “The really astonishing thing,” explained Fr. Andrew Greeley, “given the rigid structures of the pre-Vatican Church, the dramatic collapse of those structures, and the present state of confusion, is that so few priests have left and so many priests seem both happy and dedicated in their work.”⁴¹ This was the objective truth. Subjectively, however, it was a different matter entirely. With friends and co-workers resigning all around them, religious who stayed were forced to reexamine their

³⁹ Greeley, *Priests in the United States*, 205

⁴⁰ Fichter, *America's Forgotten Priests*, 81

⁴¹ Greeley, *Priests in the United States*, 212

commitments to celibacy, poverty, and obedience.⁴² Lay impressions, in particular, exacerbated this search for meaning. Fr. Greeley spoke with sarcasm of the new “concern” laypeople showed for the psychological health of their priests. “According to the new model,” he wrote bitterly,

the priest is a man who was tricked into commitments he really never understood; he is lonely, frustrated, and unhappy in his work; he desperately misses the rewards of sex and family life, and he wants to break free from the rigid constraints under which he has been forced to live in order that he might have a chance to become fully a man.⁴³

To be a priest in the years following Vatican II, elaborated Walter Burghardt, was far from easy. “You [used to be able to] commit yourself with confidence to a celibate existence for life, be respected for it by a people who rarely questioned it, and expect to die serenely in the warm arms of a Christ you had served as your one Master,” he explained of the pre-Council era. Not only did people question a priest’s basic commitment to celibacy after Vatican II, he noted, but “we even share lay insecurities: how to find and keep a job, how to retire without bitterness, how to survive old age, how to die believing, hoping, loving.”⁴⁴ In an age of such doubt and uncertainty, even fulfilled priests found it difficult to remain enthusiastic about their divinely-ordained vocations.

Those who remained often only did so after a period of crisis and personal recommitment. Some renewed their call to religious life through their work in ministry and contact with other people. Fr. Donald Jette, for example, used contact with a cancer

⁴² Greeley, *Priests in the United States*, 163

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 159

⁴⁴ Boadt and Hunt, *Why I am a Priest*, 124-25

patient to confront his restlessness following the Council. “Things were changing too fast for some, not fast enough for others, and I was caught in the middle,” he explained. “My ideals were slowly but surely drifting away, and I was very unhappy.” This loss of idealism, in addition to the sense that his fellow priests were leaving in droves, led him to doubt the appropriateness of his vocation. At the same time, however, Jette was ministering to a young woman in the hospital. She had terminal leukemia, he remembered, and he felt impotent and helpless, completely unable to make the situation any better. Shortly before she died, the woman expressed her appreciation to her struggling priest. “God has given you a true vocation to reveal his loving, compassionate heart to everyone you meet and talk to, as you have done for me,” she related gratefully, reassuring him that she was “dying with no fear because [he had] convinced [her] how much God has loved [her].” These words and this situation helped Jette rediscover the meaning in his vocation and reaffirm his dedication to the priesthood.⁴⁵ Many others had similar stories, as renewed contact with laypeople (such as through missions or social justice) helped them find purpose in their lives.

Other religious focused on a different type of relationship, their connection to the Almighty. Individual, emotional experiences took on a new importance within the post-conciliar Church. Nuns and priests, for example, began valuing personal piety over communal observance. Emotional experience was something to be sought out and

⁴⁵ Ibid., 114

appreciated, not necessarily condemned.⁴⁶ Sister Briega McKenna noticed a “great dryness in [her] spiritual life” following the Second Vatican Council and her own diagnosis with rheumatoid arthritis. “I even began to ask myself whether I really believed in Jesus,” she admitted. “I didn’t feel convinced of the power of the gospel.”⁴⁷ This desolation led her, despite her doubts, into the meetings of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Though McKenna was skeptical of the Pentecostal practices adopted by these Catholics (speaking in tongues, faith healings, etc.), she appreciated its attention to the power of the Holy Spirit in everyday life. “[P]eople [were] praying to Jesus as though he were right there,” she recalled incredulously. The sister’s participation in the Renewal not only increased her faith, but also saved her vocation. “I had a new vision of the Church,” she related in her autobiography, “as though I was seeing the Eucharist and the sacrament of reconciliation through new glasses. I was seeing more clearly God’s great love for us and what he has given us.”⁴⁸ Fr. John Randall reported similar experiences in the Renewal. Mass felt completely different after an encounter with the power of the Holy Spirit, he noted. “Everything was ringing, singing—the words, the gestures, the people, especially God!” The Divine Office, as well, became anything but mundane. “The book [was] almost jumping in my hands,” he related. “The psalms came alive as never before. The scripture

⁴⁶ Rogers, *Habits of Change*, 205

⁴⁷ Sister Briega McKenna, O.S.C., *Miracles Do Happen* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1987), 3

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 5

had really begun to sing.”⁴⁹ Just as with Sis. McKenna, the Renewal helped restore Randall’s sense of purpose in religious life.

Those in the Charismatic Renewal openly advertised this fact, trying to attract priests and other religious to participate in their new prayer groups. Religious needed “a new trust in Christ as [their] personal Savoir,” wrote early leader Dr. William Storey, something only offered by an experience of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁰ Beyond personal renewal, Storey continued in another article, the Charismatics could offer religious something they so desperately lacked in the post-conciliar era: respect. “The people in the movement want priests—precisely as priests,” he asserted. “There’s probably no other group in the Church today which will give the priest the opportunity to exercise his priesthood more authentically.”⁵¹ Other laypeople promoted the Charismatic Movement similarly, hoping to attract religious participation. Some of the earliest Catholic Pentecostals put together impromptu panels on the Renewal during religious gatherings at Notre Dame, hoping to clear up misconceptions and doubts amongst the 3,000 priests, nuns, and brothers.⁵² The Bergamo Center for Renewal in Dayton, OH attempted to similarly assuage religious doubts, but in a more official capacity. It invited the heads of religious orders to a conference on Charismatic spirituality, hoping to take away the stigma of Pentecostal

⁴⁹ Rev. John Randall, *In God’s Providence: The Birth of a Catholic Charismatic Parish* (Plainsfield, NJ: Living Flame Press, 1973), 13, 18

⁵⁰ “What the Spirit Is Saying to Religious Today,” *New Covenant*, March 1972

⁵¹ William Storey, “The Pentecostals and Catholic Tradition,” *AD Correspondence*, Oct 14, 1972, 2-7

⁵² Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals Today* (South Bend, IN: Charismatic Renewal Services, 1983), 28

practices.⁵³ In these ways, therefore, Catholic Charismatics tried to increase the presence of priests and religious in their ranks.

This was a largely uphill battle, as several aspects of religious life discouraged involvement in the Renewal. For one, religious were accustomed to providing spiritual guidance, not receiving spiritual instruction. The Catholic Charismatic Movement had originally begun amongst laypeople, as their contact with Pentecostals and Protestants had exposed them to the gifts of the Holy Spirit (tongues, healing, prophecy, etc.). Such a start, while increasing Catholic grassroots participation, provided an obstacle to many in religious life. “Here I was,” Fr. John Randall recalled of inviting a young Charismatic woman to speak to his seminarians, “an experienced spiritual director with education and training going...to pick up a nineteen year old girl to talk to the seminarians about prayer. Was I out of my mind?”⁵⁴ Other priests remembered a similar reluctance to seek out guidance from laypeople, often purely out of habit. When Fr. Harold Cohen, S.J., was interviewing a young man for admission to the Jesuits, he discovered that the man was a Catholic Pentecostal. Despite his intense interest in the Movement and desire for the gift of tongues, Cohen explained, the situation nearly prevented him from saying anything. How could he, a priest and the interviewer, possibly ask for spiritual advice from a layman and interviewee?⁵⁵ Aspects of appearance also militated against religious involvement.

⁵³ “Bergamo Center for Renewal in Dayton, OH,” 1968, Box 14, Folder 7, John F. Dearden Collection, UNDA

⁵⁴ Randall, *In God's Providence*, 22

⁵⁵ Fr. Harold Cohen, S.J., “Priests and the Charismatic Renewal,” 1971, AAVL 39115, JTC, UNDA

Nuns and priests were used to having it all together, observed Sr. Jeanne Hill, O.P., and therefore quite resistant to things that might make them look foolish, i.e. speaking in tongues.⁵⁶ Pre-Vatican II notions of religious life and stature, therefore, diminished religious participation in Charismatic meetings.

Other issues emerged around Charismatic spirituality. The intellectual and theological training of religious led them to suspect emotional forms of worship. “Most religious,” Bro. Francis Blouin explained in a *Review for Religious* article, “were educated in a rather austere, individualistic form of prayer and may feel uncomfortable...expressing themselves freely through shared prayer, personal witnessing...enthusiastic singing, clapping of hands, or other bodily gestures.”⁵⁷ Sr. Carolyn Osiek concurred. Pre-Vatican II Catholicism had produced a “culture of thinkers,” she noted, people suspicious of the religious emotion so commonly associated with Protestants.⁵⁸ Fr. John Randall’s first experience meeting Catholic Pentecostals most clearly illustrates this distaste. Upon hearing that laypeople were speaking in tongues and being baptized in the Holy Spirit, he recalled, he and another priest felt “mildly horrified.” Such emotional experience, to them, was more the stuff of psychological delusion than genuine religion. Before leaving, they

⁵⁶ Sis. Jeanne Hill, O.P., “Recognizing Our Faults in the Movement,” 19 Dec 1975, AROG 22865, Louis Rogge Collection [hereafter referred to as ROG], UNDA.

⁵⁷ Brother Francis Blouin, “Religious and the Charismatic Movement,” *Review for Religious*, vol. 34, no. 1 (1975): 71-77

⁵⁸ Carolyn Osiek, R.S.C.J., “The Spiritual Direction of ‘Thinking’ Types,” *Review for Religious*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (March/April 1985): 209-219

counselled the group against spiritual excesses, pointing particularly to the work of St. John of the Cross.⁵⁹

This resistance stemmed from pragmatic, as well as theological, concerns. Parish priests worried especially about the controversy such practices might cause amongst their congregations. Most were familiar, no doubt, with the dramatic saga of Rev. Dennis Bennet in 1960. An Episcopalian priest in Van Nuys, CA, Bennet had openly endorsed the Charismatic Movement from the pulpit. Though eliciting warm and “tender” reactions in some, such a public confession sparked red-hot rage in others. One of Bennet’s associate priests ripped off his robes and resigned on the spot, protesting that “[he] could no longer work with this man.” The other associate immediately convened with congregants in the lobby, conspiring with others to “throw out the damn tongue-speakers!” In order to prevent an open split in his parish, Bennet had to recant his words and tender his official resignation.⁶⁰ Such a turn of events was the nightmare of many a parish priest and, even though occurring in the Episcopalian Church, served as a cautionary tale for Catholic Charismatic clergy.

Religious worried about the reactions of their superiors, as well. Especially in the early years of the Renewal, the U.S. hierarchy had remained largely silent on the Renewal, issuing only a cautious endorsement in 1975. Individual bishops, moreover, had explicitly

⁵⁹ Randall, *In God’s Providence*, 7

⁶⁰ The following account is a summary of the events described in James T. Connelly, C.S.C., “Neo-Pentecostalism: The Charismatic Revival in the Mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches in the United States, 1960-1971,” PhD diss. U of Chicago, 1977, Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (251737468), 18-41

discouraged the Movement within their jurisdiction. “Excessive emotionalism, credulity and sought-after charismatic displays question the genuineness of the activity of the Spirit and open the devotion to people of peripheral stability,” cautioned Archbishop Timothy Manning of Los Angeles.⁶¹ Indeed, the priest who “came out” Charismatic might be putting his entire future in jeopardy. The Episcopalian bishop of L.A. had banned both Rev. Bennet and tongue-speaking in his diocese after the 1960 incident.⁶² Even a personal spiritual practice, therefore, could jeopardize a priest’s professional stature.

Peer pressure represented perhaps the greatest obstacle to religious involvement. Groups, by their very nature, are usually hostile to new ideas. Religious communities were no exception, explained Fr. Robert Wild in 1973, often holding “very definite notions about what life in Christ...is all about.”⁶³ They had dedicated their lives to following Him, after all, spurning worldly pursuits such as careers, families, and spouses and submitting themselves to years of spiritual formation and personal deprivation. Religious life laid out the best way to imitate Christ, many truly believed. Such commitment to the status quo would have made some nuns and priests resistant to any novelty. Indeed, post-Vatican II innovation prompted bitter debate between traditionalists and progressives, even though the progressives had the clear edge.

⁶¹ “Bishop Warns Catholics on Pentecostalism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jun 12, 1971

⁶² Connelly, “Neo-Pentecostalism,” 41-55; “Speaking in Tongues.” *Time* lxxvi, no. 7 (August 15, 1960): 55-57

⁶³ Robert Wild, “‘It Is Clear That There Are Serious Differences among You,’ (1 Cor 1:11): The Charismatic Renewal Entering Religious Communities,” *Review for Religious*, vol. 32, no. 5 (1973): 1093-1102

Aspects of the Charismatics Movement proved uniquely aggravating to those in religious community. These tongue-speakers adopted not only a new set of practices, but also an entirely new outlook on spirituality. “For charismatics,” one religious brother observed, “prayer is not a duty to perform, a ritual to observe, but the loving encounter with the Loving God, and this love of prayer overcomes the competing attractions of television, sports, social encounters, leisure activities.”⁶⁴ Such enthusiasm appeared particularly when they spoke of Pentecostal practices. Like any young lover or new convert, Charismatic religious could not restrain themselves from talking about their beloved Movement. Speaking in tongues represented the fullness of Catholic tradition, they would argue, the only way to fully abandon oneself to the power of God. Similar declarations appeared regarding one’s personal relationship with Christ, reading the Bible as if it were literally true today, witnessing in everyday life to the power of God, etc. These declarations were irritating not necessarily because of their content, but rather their confidence. Catholic Pentecostals spoke of their practices with an almost maddening certainty, attributing the Movement and their experiences directly to God. Such a tone often yet inadvertently gave the impression “that what the Spirit is doing now is so entirely new that...[the community has] not been aware of the Spirit at all.”⁶⁵ To speak so excitedly of the new (and with such surety!) was to implicitly condemn the old. Thus, the problems of language and status quo alienated many religious living in community.

⁶⁴ Blouin, “Religious and the Charismatic Movement”

⁶⁵ Wild, “It Is Clear That There Are Serious Differences among You”

Charismatic commitment, as well, added to these troubles. Those in religious life had long balanced the needs of apostolate with the demands of fellowship. While celibates committed themselves to work in hospitals, schools, missions, etc., their primary obligation lay in community life. Members occasionally over-dedicated themselves to their jobs, preferring service to high school youth, for example, to his/her religious brothers or sisters. Such neglect was regrettable, but not necessarily threatening. It was similar to the father who spent too much time on the job. His spouse might worry about his health or resent the disproportionate burdens of home life, but she would (probably) still consider him a faithful husband. This was not the case, however, when religious abandoned their community prayer sessions for Charismatic prayer groups. In contrast to other forms of ministry, noted Fr. Benedikt Songy, Pentecostals gatherings were “center[ed] directly and on the primary sense on achieving union with God, which is what we do in our religious community.”⁶⁶ Such practices bordered on spiritual adultery, as many religious admitted a real attraction to Charismatic life. “For many,” reiterated Fr. George Kosicki, “the prayer-meeting with people not of their own community is the occasion of love, fulfilment, and prayer; but when they return home they find bickering and superficiality.”⁶⁷ These spiritual activities led to physical absence from the community, as Charismatic religious travelled out for prayer

⁶⁶ Fr. Benedikt Songy, OSB, Sis. Theresa Toll, D.C., and Bro. Robert Pawall, O.F.M., “Religious Communities and Charismatic Renewal,” 1971, AAVL 39110-39111, JTC, UNDA

⁶⁷ George Kosicki, C.S.B., “Renewed Religious Life: The Dynamics of Re-discovery,” *Review for Religious* vol. 35, no. 1 (January 1976): 14-28

meetings and conferences, occasionally violating rules of cloister.⁶⁸ Just like the wife hearing stories of her husband's new female confidant, religious communities reacted negatively to being supplanted. "Why can't you find your fulfillment at home?" many non-Charismatic religious openly wondered of their brethren.⁶⁹

These two issues of confidence and commitment caused a great deal of tension amongst religious communities and discouraged religious involvement. The heads of religious orders were right to be wary about the Movement, explained Fr. Robert Wild even as he affirmed the value of Charismatic practice. "Some such communities have literally been torn apart and fragmented by the manner in which people enthusiastic about the Charismatic Renewal have approached members of their communities."⁷⁰ Indeed, superiors faced a difficult decision when it came to the Renewal. It revitalized the spiritual life of some, they knew, but poisoned the communal life of others. How could they navigate such a situation, encouraging the spontaneous expression of the Spirit but limiting its excesses?

CONFLICT AND CHARISMATICS AT BENET LAKE: A BRIEF CASE STUDY

The Benedictines of Benet Lake, WI offer a fascinating case study of how these currents played out in religious community. Founded in 1945, St. Benedict's had always been a little different from traditional monasteries. Abbot Richard Felix had envisioned

⁶⁸ Restrictions upon those in orders like the Poor Clares or Trappists meant to allow for a more isolated, more God-focused life. Songy, Toll, and Pawall, "Religious Communities and Charismatic Renewal"

⁶⁹ Kosicki, "Renewed Religious Life"

⁷⁰ Wild, "It Is Clear That There Are Serious Differences among You"

his abbey as the first of many “little centers of monastic life,” spiritual complexes meant to serve as “the leaven of which the Lord speaks of the Gospels.” He hoped Benet Lake and subsequent foundations would help revitalize Catholic life. With this goal, he advocated a missionary approach to the monastic life. St. Benedict’s became well-known in the Catholic world for its *Why?* pamphlets, short explanations of the faith meant for lay Catholics and the occasional Protestant, as well as for its thriving retreat ministry. The Benet Lake Benedictines continued this external emphasis in their efforts to form new monasteries. True to Abbot Felix’s vision, the Abbey had founded eight priories (monastic congregations dependent on a central abbey) by 1963, sending monks to domestically to Reading, PA (1952); Hingham, MA (1955); Pecos, NM (1955); and Atwater, OH (1957) and internationally to Mexico (1959), El Salvador (1960), Costa Rica (1961), and Nicaragua (1963).⁷¹ Thus, within the monastic world at the very least, St. Benedict’s had attained some notoriety and influence, as well as maintaining sense of purpose moving into the future.

Not all members were happy with such worldly success, however. “There was always something missing [in my ministry],” remembered Fr. David Geraets in a 1986 interview on the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN). “I wanted something

⁷¹ Victorine Fenton, *The English Monastic Liturgy of the Hours in North America, Vol I-III (Benedictine, Cistercian, Trappist)* (Iowa City: The University of Iowa, 1985), 972-973; “Benet Lake,” *Benet Lake News and Views*, Aug-Sept 1973; “Abbot Richard Felix, O.S.B.: March 31, 1890-May 26, 1973,” *Benet Lake News and Views*, Aug-Sept 1973; Edward E. Malone, *Conception: A History of the First Century of Conception Abbey, 1873-1973* (Omaha, NE: Interstate Printing Company, 1971), 206-207; “Why the Whys?” *Benet Lake News & Views*, June-July 1974

more.”⁷² The monk elaborated on this experience in a later newspaper interview. Though a member of the monastery since 1956, he related, “[I was] a little bit disillusioned with the institutional church, and even traditional monasticism [by the time of Vatican II].”⁷³ Brother Gerard Stokes had a similarly bleak assessment of monastic life. Working on an assignment in Pecos, NM since 1955, he was contemplating quitting the order by the mid-1960s.⁷⁴ With such doubts surfacing for Geraets and Stokes, one can presume that others in the monastery were dealing with similar questions, searching for the meaning in their ministries and religious style of life.

Geraets, at the very least, found his answer in a renewed appreciation of man’s emotionality. Sent to study missiology at the Gregorian Pontifical University in the 1960s, the young monk made such desires the foundation of his doctoral thesis, which examined the role of music in teaching the faith. “Why music?” he asked rhetorically, “simply because of its extraordinary power to move a man in his entirety!”⁷⁵ Lyrics and melodies, the Benedictine priest explained, could circumvent the logical opposition of non-believers, precisely by “evoking *the non-rational* element of religious experience first.”⁷⁶ Music functioned “as an intermediary for the uplifting of a creature to his Creator and a means of

⁷² “Mother Angelica & Abbot David Geraets, OSB on EWTN,” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated Oct 27, 2011, accessed Mar 13, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAIN45izBCY&list=PL443B4AB73CA592FC>

⁷³ Ed Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism,” *The Telegraph*, Dec 7, 1987

⁷⁴ Scully, “Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake”

⁷⁵ David Geraets, *The Role of Music in the Missionary Catechetical Apostolate*. Benet Lake: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1968, 11

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 7

communicating these experiences encountered on high to others.”⁷⁷ The young monk worked especially to convince those who might consider music too earthly to express eternal realities. “Material means are entirely inadequate to express the spiritual,” he admitted, “yet for man there is normally no other way....Music does not confine the entire being to a definitive object. Man can transcend the object....He may approach the object for its own sake in the beginning, but later he is lifted to a higher purpose.”⁷⁸ Geraets waxed eloquent in his defense of music as a path to God. “Mere intellectual knowledge *about* God is not enough,” he wrote passionately. “Man must experience, *know* God, as far as is possible *in this* life, if religious is to mean anything *for this life*.”⁷⁹

Such writing speaks, on one level, to the Spirit of Vatican II flowing through the Catholic Church. Clergy devoted new attention to reaching the unconverted, as well as to the insights of psychology and anthropology. The focus on reception spoke to the temperament of the times. All too often, the Church had favored immutability over accessibility, and perfection over participation. The Tridentine (or Latin) Mass illustrated this bias, as the priest was thought to be performing a ritual for God, not for the people. A parishioner’s job was to observe faithfully, not engage actively. Yet, the writing also spoke to Geraets’ own mindset, particularly as he observed the developments of Vatican II. One can feel the critical, almost longing tone of the writing. This was a man fundamentally dissatisfied by his experiences of religious life, and over-intellectualized spirituality

⁷⁷ Ibid., 38

⁷⁸ Ibid., 40

⁷⁹ Ibid., 38, emphasis in original

especially. Fr. Geraets was searching for something, some sort of religious experience that would engage his emotions and, he hoped, make religious doctrine more relevant to daily life. And so, the priest brought his doctorate and longings back to Benet Lake in 1967, along with vague murmurs of something called the Catholic Charismatic Movement.

Geraets had first heard of the Renewal while in Rome and had looked forward eagerly to learning more upon his return to the States. Other Benet Lake brothers expressed a curiosity as well, displaying a desire to go out and investigate this phenomenon of tongue-speaking. Coincidentally or, as the monks would see it, providentially, the Movement found them first. Sally Rickerts, a Charismatic Episcopalian, arrived at the monastery on October 7, 1967. She came bearing gifts, a tape recording of Charismatic Catholic priest Edward O'Connor, as well as copies of Pentecostal classics like *They Speak in Other Tongues* and *Aglow in the Spirit*. This material only inflamed Geraets' desire to experience an outpouring of the Spirit. He and three brothers sought out Rickerts for more advice, attending a small Pentecostal prayer meeting at her house one week later.⁸⁰ The next week, Geraets and two different monks traveled to Zion, IL for yet another Pentecostal gathering. There, they met Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, a prominent couple in the early Charismatic Renewal; together, they prayed for the future of Benet Lake and the entire Catholic Church, pleading with God to set his Church on fire with the Spirit.⁸¹ In the midst of such devout

⁸⁰ Scully, "Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake"

⁸¹ Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals* (New York: Paulist Press, 1969), 49; Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals Today*, 29; "Abbot David Geraets OSB-'Charismatic' Pt 1," Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O'Donnell, last updated 19 Jan 2012, accessed 5 Mar 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv_v-W0jK2E; Doug Wead, "What Do They Do in a Pentecostal

petitions, Fr. Geraets first gave himself over to speaking in tongues. He recalled later his surprise at the “overwhelming, loving presence” that filled his heart. Though only lasting a few moments, this experience changed his whole concept of religion. “God! This thing is real after all!” he marveled.⁸²

As Geraets and his brothers continued attending such meetings, other monks came to similar realizations. Bro. Bruno Quebedeaux remembered the change beginning gradually. He had prayed fervently during the Pentecostal meetings, with little to no effect. There was a slight sense of peace and comfort, he recalled, but nothing dramatic like Geraets’ sudden venture into tongues. A strange feeling came over him once he had returned to the monastery, however, particularly after opening the Bible. A new life pulsed in the pages, making the stories seem alive and personally real to him. This feeling grew and grew, with Quebedeaux becoming more aware of God’s work in his life and presence in the world around him until he gave himself over to tongues as well. “It’s a whole new world in the Spirit,” he explained breathlessly. “Creation is more beautiful; people are more meaningful and beautiful. Every second, every moment, every day has become an adventure with God, in God, and through God.”⁸³ This excitement was so great that he could scarcely speak of anything else. Such a sense of purpose and divinity, explained Fr.

Monastery,” in *Catholic Charismatics: Are They for Real?* by Doug Wead (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1973): 60-68

⁸² “Mother Angelica & Abbot David Geraets, OSB on EWTN”; Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., “God: Visions, Dreams & Revelations,” talk given at Southern California Renewal Communities Conference, 2001

⁸³ James Scully, OSB, “Pentecostal Benedictines,” February 1971, Box 1, Folder 23, Judith Church Tydings Papers, UNDA

Daniel Scully, was desperately needed in the monastery in the wake of Vatican II. “Everything we had believed in, everything we had dedicated our lives to seemed to take on new light, new life and our faith in all these things was renewed,” he summarized of his and his brothers’ experience. “This came at a time,” he continued, “when monasticism, religious life, a lot of things were under fire as obsolete [sic], outmoded and things that we should junk in order to modernize the church.”⁸⁴ Their faith in God reaffirmed, this small but growing group of monks took their first steps towards the Charismatic Movement, towards controversy, and towards Pecos.

The Charismatics of Benet Lake gained an influential supporter in their superior, Abbot Andrew Garber. At the behest of Scully, his prior and second-in-command, Garber attended a Pentecostal prayer meeting in Elk Grove Village, Chicago featuring Kevin Ranaghan. He left the meeting pleasantly surprised and reassured by the spirit of prayer: it was, at the very least, not heretical. This opinion changed over the next couple days, however. Shocked at his new enthusiasm for prayer (even the notoriously dry Divine Office), Garber called Scully into his office for a private conversation. If this was a minor fruit of the Pentecostal Movement, he questioned his subordinate, what would full involvement bring? The Abbot then requested his subordinate to pray over him, asking for a “Baptism in the Holy Spirit” and the power to speak in tongues. As Scully prayed, God answered. Abbot Garber began speaking in tongues and, by virtue of the experience, was more than favorably disposed to the Movement. He would not announce his participation

⁸⁴ Scully, “Charismatic Renewal Pecos Tape 2”

publically or participate in prayer meetings, the superior explained to his second-in-command, but he would allow the Renewal to continue unhindered at the monastery.⁸⁵

Through personal relationships and Pentecostal flowerings, therefore, the Movement gradually grew at Benet Lake. Monk after monk joined Geraets and his fellows to travel outside the monastery for prayer meetings, eventually numbering around fifteen of the seventy-five religious at St. Benedict's. By late October 1967, they had begun their own prayer meetings within the community. Held immediately after Compline (or Night Prayer), they would sometimes last until one or two in the morning, so aflame were the brothers with a desire to praise God through the Charismatic gifts. The monks kept their meetings a secret, however. "We had to bootleg it at night...during night silence," recalled Geraets, "because we didn't want anyone else to know what was going on."⁸⁶ Their monastic brothers might not be receptive to the gifts, they knew, and might pressure the Abbot to forbid such practices at the abbey. Thus, love of the Movement encouraged Geraets and his fellow Charismatics to keep their meetings and tongue-speaking a secret, at least until they gained more support within the monastery.

Such fears were quite valid, as they were realized soon after the start of the Benet Lake group. Community members could not fail to notice the new enthusiasm of Geraets

⁸⁵ Scully, "Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake"; James Connelly, C.S.C., "The Charismatic Movement: 1967-1970," in *As the Spirit Leads Us*, edited by Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan (Paramus, NJ: Paulist Press, 1971)

⁸⁶ Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., "Christianity and Stress," talk given at Southern California Renewal Communities Conference, 1998; Scully, "Pentecostal Benedictines"; Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., "Catechesis and Charismatic Renewal III," undated, School for Spiritual Directors Binder 2014, Our Lady of Guadalupe Benedictine Monastery, Pecos, New Mexico.

and the others, nor their absence from community events. “People were wondering what was going on in the monastery,” Geraets explained of the small community, “[thinking that] we were drinking all the Abbey’s booze, or whatever.”⁸⁷ The Charismatics did themselves no favors in this regard, as they could not restrain themselves from telling others about the Movement. They spoke eagerly to their brothers about the power of the Holy Spirit, particularly targeting postulants and other junior members of the monastery.⁸⁸ This excessive proselytism, in addition to the secretive meetings, led to a growing tension within St. Benedict’s. Individual monks began voicing their concerns to the Abbot, complaining that it had the appearance of a faction. These individuals soon coalesced into a group in open opposition to the Movement. Led by Fr. Joseph, the vocation director who would resign his position in protest, they remained “adamantly opposed,” seeing the Renewal as a “threat to the monastic way of life, if not to their Catholic faith.”⁸⁹

Abbot Garber called a community meeting to deal with the tension on October 29, 1967. Lasting over three hours, the session allowed the monks to voice their arguments for and against the Movement. Many of the anti-Charismatics pressured Garber to condemn the new practices, threatening to leave if Pentecostal worship continued under the monastery’s roof. Exercising his leadership, the Abbot promoted a compromise. The Pentecostal meetings would continue, he decreed, but only once a week and never in secret. Any monk could attend, whether in the Movement or not, so long as he maintained

⁸⁷ Geraets, “Catechesis and Charismatic Renewal III”

⁸⁸ Scully, “Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake”

⁸⁹ Ibid.; Scully, “Pentecostal Benedictines”; “Two Currents”

respectful of what was happening. Garber also announced his non-involvement in the Movement, as he worried his presence would lend implicit support to the Pentecostals. Such a pronouncement quelled the tension, at least for a little while.⁹⁰

In the meantime, Garber sought out the help of outside experts. He contacted Kevin Ranaghan and Fr. Edward O'Connor, the foremost national spokesmen of the Renewal, to ask their advice regarding the situation of St. Benedict's. Both encouraged the Abbot, agreeing to come to Benet Lake in December and answer any questions community members might have about the Charismatic gifts and their place in the life of the Church. Not content with theological validation, however, Garber sought out psychological evaluation. He enlisted Dr. McCall of Marquette University to help evaluate the practice of tongue-speaking. McCall, to his relief, judged the Pentecostals favorably; those so vehemently opposed to the workings of the Holy Spirit might have more need of assistance, the psychologist believed. This lull also brought hierarchical validation to the Renewal. The Vatican had sent out a letter to the superiors of all religious communities, urging them not to squelch Charismatic practices.⁹¹ Blessed with this external validation and bolstered by his own experiences, Garber felt justified in allowing limited Pentecostal activity to continue at Benet Lake.

The activities of Garber's subordinates, however, conspired against his compromise. The Charismatics had accepted certain limitations. Fr. Geraets, for example,

⁹⁰ Scully, "Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake"

⁹¹ Ibid.

refrained from speaking at (though not participating in) outside prayer meetings, so as not to draw attention to the monastery as a whole. They kept their meetings open and public to other monks, as well. All in the community were invited, even though members or soon-to-be members were the only who attended.⁹² Charismatics flaunted the monastery's restrictions in other ways, however. Like Geraets, many others ventured outside the monastery on a weekly or biweekly basis, meeting up with Sally Rickerts or other groups of Pentecostals. The monks soon opened their own gatherings to the general public. Though attracting few at first, these prayer sessions were bringing in over a hundred people each week before long, often from the nearby cities of Milwaukee and Chicago.⁹³ Scully credited the popularity of such meetings to the credibility of the monastery. Other groups might have promoted disbelief instead of Charismatic faith, he explained, but laypeople felt they could trust the Movement "precisely because they heard of these things from presumably orthodox Catholic monks."⁹⁴ These gatherings soon branched into Pentecostal retreats, as Geraets and his fellows invited lay men and women to come for extended instruction in the Spirit. Such guidance, along with active promotion, made Benet Lake the "cradle of the Catholic Pentecostal Movement in this area," later leaders in Chicago acknowledged.⁹⁵

⁹² Ibid; "Two Currents"

⁹³ "Two Currents"

⁹⁴ Scully, "Pentecostal Benedictines"

⁹⁵ *Day of Renewal Bulletin*, Sunday, April 4, 1971, Box 2, Folder 35, ROG, UNDA

This expansion spoke not only to a desire for evangelism, but also a dissatisfaction with existing community. Geraets and his brothers wanted to be part of a community where they could “praise the Lord first of all.”⁹⁶ Yet, that was not the culture of Benet Lake. Though accepting limitations for the short-term, Geraets wondered openly about the community’s “the inability to discuss Jesus Christ in [its] everyday conversations.”⁹⁷ Such a willingness to offer praise, the Charismatics of St. Benedict’s believed, should never be absent from any believer’s life, much less the life of someone committing himself to a religious order. The Charismatic leader openly questioned the spiritual maturity of his non-Charismatic brothers in Christ. “Psychologically speaking,” he explained in 1971, “what is on your mind, you speak about.” To not speak of Christ was to not be fit for religious life. Benet Lake’s most enthusiastic members, therefore, came to feel unsupported, as well as confined, within the structures of the monastery. This contrasted sharply with their own enjoyment of Charismatic meetings. In that space and with those people, they felt as if they could truly share themselves, their spiritual triumphs, and their spiritual struggles. Such freedom did not exist in normal monastery meetings.⁹⁸ Based on this experience, Charismatics began to dream, almost longingly, of a time when they could fully and openly praise the Lord, even if such participation would require them leaving their home at Benet Lake.

⁹⁶ Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., “Finding Your Charismatic Roots,” talk given at Southern California Renewal Communities Conference, 1979

⁹⁷ David Geraets, OSB, “Leadership and Community,” 1970, AJTC 29982, JTC, UNDA

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Non-Charismatics looked upon this expanding involvement with increasing exasperation. The monastery seemed almost overrun by Pentecostals, particularly on the weekends. Fr. Joseph expressed his displeasure with a thirty-five person retreat planned for March 1968, claiming that such numbers of laypeople would disturb the normal routines of monastic life. Similar complaints arose over the attendance of weekly prayer meetings. Non-Charismatics had gone into monastic life to live separate from the world, not to play host to hundreds of weekly visitors. Beyond mere inconvenience, they feared the increasing notoriety of the monastery. Outsiders were beginning to associate St. Benedict's with the Charismatic Renewal, and not its previous missionary efforts. Such notoriety had, in fact, informed the resignation of Fr. Joseph the vocation director, as he could not bear to publically represent a monastery so well known for its Pentecostal activities.⁹⁹ The Charismatic Movement affected Benet Lake's standing in the outside world, often in a way resented by their more traditional brethren.

It strained their relationships with each other, as well. Those involved in the Pentecostal Movement, their brothers complained, could scarcely speak of any other topic. They talked incessantly of the Charismatic gifts, as well as their value in monastic life. Such enthusiasm often progressed into proselytism. Was God not powerful enough to bring miracles into everyday life or to communicate to his faithful through strange practices like speaking in tongues? they questioned their fellow monastics. The phrasing of this language also worried non-Charismatics. Geraets and his brothers attributed certain

⁹⁹ Scully, "Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake"

thoughts and desires directly to God, seeing his hand in shaping their lives. “I feel like the Lord is telling you to have patience and trust in the goodness of His plan,” a typical assertion might read. Those opposed to the Movement found such practices endlessly frustrating. Not only did these proclamations invalidate the authenticity of others’ spiritual lives, non-Charismatics claimed, but they also opened up the door to dangerous delusions. If God can tell someone something that others have to “take on faith,” these monks reasoned, where would it stop? What of obedience to religious superior and Church authority? They worried about the limits of valuing subjective experience, particularly within a religion that professed objective truths.¹⁰⁰

Tensions reached a climax in late May, 1968, requiring Abbot Garber to call another community meeting. This time, he met with Charismatics and their opponents separately, speaking to the growing enmity between the two camps. “[The Renewal] split the abbey right down the middle,” Geraets summarized in 1981, with “about half the community [getting] involved with the Baptism of the Spirit and the Charismatic Renewal and about half [not].”¹⁰¹ The young priest recalled the frustration experienced by so many of the Charismatics. “The greatest pain I’ve ever suffered in my life was trying to share the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and God’s deep love with people who couldn’t receive it,” he explained of their attempts to spread the Movement and its joy. “Have you ever tried to teach a song to someone who can’t sing? That’s the exact same experience,” he

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., “Discerning Visions and Revelations,” talk given at Southern California Renewal Communities Conference, Van Nuys, CA, 1981

concluded tragically.¹⁰² This meeting seemed to solidify the broadening rift between the two groups. Charismatics seemed to sense their incompatibility with traditional monastic structures, whereas their brothers came to see that the Movement could never exist in an attenuated form. Though Garber again prevented an open split, the time of Fr. Geraets and the Charismatics at Benet Lake appeared to be nearing its end.

¹⁰² Geraets, "Finding Your Charismatic Roots"

Chapter 2: ‘As the Spirit Leads Us’: *An Introduction to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal*

For the 1970s United States, bizarre seemed to have become the new normal. Presidential lies and resignations rocked the American people, while the perplexing popularity of disco music moved and grooved them. As an unwinnable war in Vietnam tarnished illusions of U.S. credibility at home and abroad, environmental disasters like Love Canal dirtied the image even further. A broadcaster’s signoff became a well-known statement on the Iran Hostage Crisis; Black Power offered a statement of its own, but in fashion rather than politics. Certainly, the 1970s was a strange time for America. For certain papers like the *Dallas Morning News*, *Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times*, however, one of the most unexpected things was not happening on Capitol Hill, television news, or a dancefloor, but rather in houses, churches, and auditoriums across the nation.¹ Small groups of people were gathering together, joining together in song and spirit and toting ever-present guitars and tambourines. Their melodies were not the old strains of protest from the Civil Rights Movement nor the psychedelic riffs of Woodstock, but rather praises offered to a living and loving God. “Praise that name above all names,” one participant called out to the rest of the group, receiving a joyous response of “Thank you Jesus. Praise you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord God.” Tongues and personal testimony filled

¹ See, for example, “Renewal Seen in Pentecost,” *Dallas Morning News*, Dec 19, 1970; “Catholics Develop Pentecostal Spirit in Prayer Meetings,” *The Los Angeles Times*, July 11, 1971; “The Charismatics: New Catholic Groups Adopt Non-Regulation Worship Style,” *The Washington Post*, 14 April 1975

the air, as believers sought to glorify God by their words and non-words alike. Miraculous healings made their appearance, as did divinely-inspired prophecies. Though profoundly unlike mainstream religious services across the United States, the strangeness of these practices revolved not so much around *what* was being done, but rather *who* was doing it. These people, so full of joy and full of the Spirit, were not old-timey revivalists nor Pentecostal Holy-Rollers, but normally reserved American Roman Catholics! How in the world had Roman Catholics, a group well-known for its ritualistic spirituality and (normally) staid disposition, come to endorse and even encourage such religious emotionalism? The Catholic Charismatic Renewal promoted a profoundly different vision of community, faith, and the Holy Spirit, one that dramatically affected Catholic life in the 1970s and 80s.

The Catholic Charismatic Movement (known officially as the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and unofficially as the Catholic Pentecostal Movement) had its roots in Pentecostalism and Pentecostal-inspired Protestantism (also known as neo-Pentecostalism). The Classical Pentecostals had first appeared in Kansas and Los Angeles in the early 1900s, spreading primarily amongst the poor, disposed, and ethnic minorities. Theirs was a religion full of hope, emotion, and miracles. Pentecostals believed in a living and active Holy Spirit, no less influential in the current age than in the Biblical days of Acts and Pentecost (hence the name). Their experiences of healings, prophecies, and tongues, they believed, testified to the reality of God's supernatural and ever-present power. Observers came to most associate Pentecostals with their practice of speaking in

tongues. Tongues, “a spontaneous utterance of uncomprehend and seemingly random speech sounds,” were thought to transcend the limitations of human language. Pentecostals believed this “Baptism of/win/in the Holy Spirit” signified one’s true acceptance of Christ and, by extension, promise of salvation after death. Such an experiential theology remained largely on the fringes of Christian belief throughout the mid-1940s, making Pentecostalism a religion of the poor and dispossessed.²

Yet, the late 1950s and 60s brought new life, as these practices took root in more “respectable” congregations. Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians joined together in their own neo-Pentecostal or Charismatic Movement, all promoting similar ideas about tongues and the activity of the Spirit in everyday life. Despite this appreciation, however, these newcomers largely remained within their traditional denominations, hoping to combine Protestant tradition with Pentecostal theology. Intriguingly, Neo-Pentecostals tended to hail from more liturgical and hierarchical traditions (Lutherans, Episcopalians). While facing a considerable degree of hostility from their co-religionists, Charismatics grew in numbers and influence throughout the 1950s and 60s.³

² Fabian Osowski, “Pentecost and Pentecostals: A Happening,” *Review for Religious*, vol.27 (1968): 1064-1088; Morton T. Kelsey, “Speaking in Tongues in 1971: An Assessment of Its Meaning and Values,” *Review for Religious*, vol. 30 (1971): 245-255

³ Ibid.; “Charismatic Movement Viewed as Lasting,” *Dallas Morning News*, 1 Feb 1975; Joseph Fichter, “How It Looks to a Social Scientist,” *New Catholic World*, Nov/Dec 1974: 244-248; Ralph Martin, “How Shall We Relate to Church?” *New Catholic World*, (Nov/Dec 1974): 249-252. For probably the fullest description of Neo-Pentecostal growth and characteristics, see James T. Connelly, C.S.C., “Neo-Pentecostalism: The Charismatic Revival in the Mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches in the United States, 1960-1971,” PhD diss. U of Chicago, 1977.

U.S. Catholics, though slower to adopt such enthusiastic practices, soon became the largest and most influential of the new Charismatics. While occasional priests and laymen had experienced tongues or the Baptism of the Holy Spirit [hereafter referred to as BoHS], the 1967 “Duquesne Weekend” represented the first collective and sustained venture of Catholics into Pentecostalism. The retreatants, students and professors from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh⁴, had convened specifically to pray for a renewal of their faith. Toward the end of the retreat, they began breaking out in tongues, aided by neo-Pentecostal texts like *The Cross and the Switchblade* by David Wilkerson and *They Speak in Other Tongues* by John Sherrill.⁵ The experience of speaking in tongues, participants claimed, changed the course of their whole lives. “I had a tremendous hunger for Scripture and prayer,” Elaine Ransil explained of her life after the weekend.

God seemed to be talking directly to me when I read His word. I carried my Bible with me everywhere (the big four-inch-thick Jerusalem Bible!). It wasn’t unusual to spend several hours a day praying and reading the Word. I couldn’t get enough! God was real. I knew what salvation meant, and that was exciting news worth sharing. So I witnessed to anyone who would hold still and listen.⁶

As Ransil’s quote suggests, this experience prompted an entirely new perspective on life, particularly on Christian witness. Such a characteristic would have immense ramifications for the future of the Catholic Pentecostalism.

⁴ A school which, as Charismatics delight in pointing out, was administered by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit.

⁵ For a first-person account of the Duquesne Weekend, see Patti Mansfield, *As by a New Pentecost: the Dramatic Beginning of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Steubenville, OH: Franciscan U, 1992)

⁶ Mansfield, *As by a New Pentecost*, 105

Letters, phone calls, and personal visits soon spread these practices to other university campuses. “Our faith has come alive. Our believing has become a kind of knowing,” Professor Ralph Keifer wrote to friends at Notre Dame, many of whom would become later leaders in the Movement.

Suddenly, the world of the supernatural has become more real than the natural. In brief, Jesus Christ is a real person to us, a real living person who is our Lord and who is active in our lives. (Cf. the New Testament and read it as though it were literally true now, every word, every line.) Prayer and the sacraments have become truly our daily bread instead of practices which we recognize as ‘good for us.’ A love of the Scriptures, a love of the Church I never thought possible, a transformation of our relationships with others, a need and a power to witness beyond all expectation, have all become part of our lives.⁷ In this way, religious experience thus fueled future evangelism, as tens, then hundreds of Catholic students were attracted by Charismatic enthusiasm. The burgeoning Movement soon popped up in places throughout the Midwest and cities like Ames, Denver, and Cleveland.⁸ Notre Dame occupied a central role in this early spread, with its students sponsoring some of the earliest Charismatic conferences. Attracting some 90 participants in 1967, the gathering brought in 1300 in 1970, 4500 in 1971, and over 10,000 by 1973. “We’ve come to count on it about tripling each year,” organizer Sis. Mary Catherine

⁷ Jim Manney, “Before Duquesne: Sources of the Renewal,” *New Covenant*, undated, retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/doc/116722455/Before-Duquesne-Sources-of-the-Renewal-Charismatic-New-Covenant-Magazine>; Future members privy to this letter include Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, Bert Ghezzi, Paul deCelles, Steve Clark, Ralph Martin, Kerry Koller, Jim Cavnar, Fr. Edward O’Connor, George Martin, and James Byrne.

⁸ Claire E. Wolfteich, *American Catholics Through the Twentieth Century* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2001), 86; Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals Today* (South Bend, IN: Charismatic Renewal Services, 1983), 28

reported matter-of-factly.⁹ The growing popularity of such events spoke to broader national trends. “The most striking thing about it—from the little I know,” explained a *Commonweal* editor in 1972, “is its size. Pentecostals seem to be everywhere.”¹⁰ His impression was spot-on. By 1971, prayer groups in Los Angeles and Ann Arbor could claim weekly attendance upwards of 700; by 1975, national membership stood somewhere around 500,000.¹¹ The 1977 International Charismatic Conference in Kansas City offered perhaps the most dramatic visualization of Charismatic growth. Sixty thousand tongue-speakers filled the Kansas City Chiefs’ Arrowhead Stadium, attracting national press coverage and the attention of even higher powers. President Jimmy Carter, no doubt encouraged by his own Evangelical faith and his sister’s presence at the conference, sent an official letter of greeting. Such a dignified well-wisher, in addition to the surprising demographic appeal, illustrates the cultural importance of the Catholic Charismatic Movement in the United States.¹²

⁹ “Something Happening in Catholic Church,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1976; “20,000 Catholic Pentecostals Meet, Urging Church Support,” *Washington Post*, Jun 4, 1973; “‘Charismatic’: Spirit Movement Sweeps Catholics,” *Dallas Morning News*, 18 June 1972

¹⁰ Letter from Art Winter to Richard Conklin, 12 April 1972, Box 31, Folder 3, Notre Dame Library Department of Information Services, University of Notre Dame Archives, Notre Dame, IN, 46556 [hereafter referred to as UNDA]; For a more detailed account of the early spread of the Renewal, see Robert Crowe, *Pentecostal Unity: Recurring Frustration and Enduring Hope* (Chicago: Loyola U Press, 1993) or Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals* (New York: Paulist Press, 1969).

¹¹ “Catholics Develop Pentecostal Spirit in Prayer Meetings”; “Charismatic Movement Viewed as Lasting”; “Something Happening in Catholic Church,” *Los Angeles Times*, 23 April 1976; “Clergy Urged to be Involved with Catholic Charismatics,” *Washington Post*, 4 June 1976; “Press Booklet for the 1977 Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches,” 1977, Box 6, Folder 1, NCR #2001-164, National Catholic Reporter Files, UNDA

¹² Interview with Fr. James Connelly, C.S.C., 16 June 2015; “‘Charismatic’ Christians to Meet in Kansas City,” *New York Times*, 21 July 1977; “60,000 Charismatics to Meet in Kansas City,” *Dallas Morning News*, 16 July 1977

The Renewal gained not just national, but international prominence in the Catholic world. In 1975, Pope Paul VI invited 10,000 Charismatics to join him for a Papal Mass at the Vatican. “The Church and the world need what you have—your new joy and enthusiasm,” he told the assembled Catholic Pentecostals. “Now go and give it to them.”¹³ The Roman Pontiff extended this welcome organizationally, as well, creating the office of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal under the supervision of Cardinal Joseph Suenens. While embraced by the international Catholic Church, Charismatics found a less enthusiastic reception for their Pentecostal practices at home. Many bishops, fearing the tendencies towards elitism, Biblical fundamentalism, and emotionalism in the Movement, remained relatively “aloof,” despite official approval from the Vatican and the U.S. Catholic Council of Bishops in 1975.¹⁴

Charismatics recognized this disjuncture, working actively to make their Movement less threatening to the Roman hierarchy. Some figures addressed these suspicions head-on, pleading for greater oversight. “Where (else) in the church today do you have such growing numbers of people crying out for your support and your guidance?” questioned Jesuit priest Harold Cohen.¹⁵ Charismatics also relied on the stature and expertise of certain religious like Harold Cohen, S.J., Edward O’Connor, C.S.C., and

¹³ “Charismatics Gain Pope’s Approval: Controversial Catholic Movement Blessed During Pentecost,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 8, 1975

¹⁴ “Catholics Develop Pentecostal Spirit in Prayer Meetings”; “Pentecostalism Gets Catholic Bishops’ OK,” *Los Angeles Times*, 23 Nov 1969; “Charismatic Catholics Encounter a Degree of Coolness,” *The Washington Post*, 8 June 1973; “Laity Assuming Bigger Role in Catholic Church,” *Los Angeles Times*, 20 Feb 1978; Richard Mouw, “Catholic Pentecostalism,” *The Reformed Journal*, vol 22, no. 6 (July-August 1972): 8-15

¹⁵ “20,000 Catholic Pentecostals Meet, Urging Church Support”

Killian McDonnell, O.S.B. These priests all penned works in defense of the Charismatic Movement, working actively to address concerns about the structure of the Renewal. Fr. O'Connor, for example, openly dismissed those who believed the Movement too emotional. These meetings were relaxed, humorous even; there was no sort of attempt to “trigger” religious experience. “I can think of nothing better calculated to dissipate any atmosphere of the supernatural,” he noted whimsically, “than the sight of a round-faced St. Mary’s sophomore curled up on the sofa across the room, chomping away at a handful of popcorn.” This thing was genuine, and not manufactured. “What draws [Charismatics] together is not any psychic need or bent,” he concluded, “but the experience of having been touched powerfully by the Spirit of God.”¹⁶ This emphasis on apologetics led even to a name change for the Renewal. Though Catholic Charismatics had originally referred to themselves as Catholic Pentecostals, they began referring to themselves as the “Catholic Charismatic Renewal” in an attempt to downplay any fears of schism.¹⁷ In this way, Charismatics actively attempted to address concerns about their orthodoxy, both to gain the acceptance of ecclesial authorities and more effectively evangelize amongst the Catholic laity.

By and large, they succeeded, at least on the second aspect. Everywhere, people were flocking to the Movement. But who was it that joined the Renewal? Protestants and

¹⁶ Edward O'Connor, *Pentecost in the Catholic Church: A Trilogy on the Catholic Pentecostal Movement* (Pecos, NM: Dove Publications, 1970), 30, 33

¹⁷ Michael D. Murphy, “The Culture of Spontaneity and the Politics of Enthusiasm: Catholic Pentecostalism in a California Parish,” in *Culture and Christianity: The Dialectics of Transformation*, edited by George R. Saunders (New York: Greenwood, 1988): 135-158

Pentecostals finally coming around to the truth? Priests and nuns looking for a sense of purpose after Vatican II? Cult leaders with crucifixes? Catholic priest-sociologist Joseph Fichter set out to answer just these questions in his 1975 book *The Catholic Cult of the Paraclete*. The Renewal, he detailed, “[was] largely a movement of the laity within the Church.” This applied both to membership and leadership, a few prominent priests like Fr. Edward O’Connor and Fr. Francis MacNutt notwithstanding.¹⁸ This differentiated the Charismatics from most Catholic devotions, as clergy usually had at least nominal leadership of shrines and societies. Fichter also commented on patterns of social class, ethnicity, and gender. Catholic Pentecostals were stereotypically middle class, he gleaned, college-educated, and white-skinned. Though led by men (like most religious organizations), the Movement was overwhelmingly (2/3) female in its membership (also like most religious organizations). Few were converts. Most had grown up Catholic and attended Catholic schools. Geographically, the Catholic Pentecostalism had the strongest presence in the Midwest, Southwest, and Northeast, traditional centers of U.S. Catholicism.¹⁹

Fichter examined theological, in addition to demographic, composition. He identified three core beliefs shared by the majority of the Movement. Charismatics believed that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent, he noted, meaning that they

¹⁸ Joseph Fichter, *The Catholic Cult of the Paraclete* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1975), 12

¹⁹ Ibid., 54, 141; Fichter, “How It Looks to a Social Scientist”; Edward O’Connor, C.S.C., *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (South Bend, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1971), 18-19; Scorsone, “Authority, Conflict, and Integration,” 7

thought He would return sometime within their lifetime. This was an expectant faith, as well as a confident one. Participants held that, by virtue of accepting Jesus and their experience of the BoHS, they were saved. This certainty of salvation was, besides tongues, their hallmark, this “knowing” that they were going to heaven. Finally, Charismatics tended to value emotional over intellectual knowledge. Emotional appeals filled their testimony, as well as a tendency to emphasize the necessity of personal experience.²⁰ You can only evaluate it through being there yourself, they would chide their non-Charismatic friends who had yet to attend a prayer meeting.

This last point brings up a particularly interesting consideration. Though Fichter and other sources offer a solid overview of Charismatic theology, organization, and characteristics, such academic treatment divorces the Movement from its intensely personal context. Can intellectual understanding substitute for experiential knowledge? Charismatics, if presented with such a question, would respond clearly in the negative. Sociologists Richard Bord and Joseph Faulkner learned this firsthand. During their academic study of the Movement, they recalled a great deal of “low-key chiding about letting the intellect interfere with the work of the Holy Spirit.”²¹ True understanding, Charismatics would argue, could come from experience. Perhaps they have a point. To better illustrate the main characteristics of the Charismatic Renewal, this chapter proceeds somewhat imaginatively. It alternates between observation and participation, weaving

²⁰ Fichter, *The Catholic Cult of the Paraclete*, 41-52

²¹ Richard J. Bord and Joseph E. Faulkner, *The Catholic Charismatics: The Anatomy of a Modern Religious Movement* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 1983), ix

together a fictionalized narrative (a woman attending her first prayer meeting) with academic description. Each is meant to complement the other, with the story promoting personal involvement and the background providing intellectual context. The narrative aspects are not literally true, but rather based on first-person accounts and the author's personal experience. From here on out, this chapter moves forward in that mode, exploring a Catholic Charismatic prayer meeting from two angles: the personal and the analytical.²²

“HAPPINESS MAKES PEOPLE WONDER”: CHARISMATIC PRAYER MEETINGS AND THE POWER OF PERSONAL CONNECTION

Susan is a middle-aged woman. She has three children, mostly grown by now, as well as a middle-aged husband. He works in accounting, providing them with a happy, or at least comfortable life. Susan enjoys her life and husband and children and especially the family's two dogs, Lucky and King, but she cannot help but feel that something is missing. Currently, she is driving to her suburban Catholic parish, tapping her hand on the wheel nervously. “I don't know why I agreed to do this,” she thinks to herself silently. “It's all Marge's fault!” Marge had been the person to invite her to this “Charismatic” meeting, after all. That was it, right, Charismatic? Anyways, she had been so persistent! Always talking about how Susan needed to “come and see for herself,” and always talking about those silly prayer meetings. Susan had agreed to go only to shut her up. “She's become

²² Unless otherwise noted, descriptions come from the author's personal experience or personal accounts from Mary Jo Neitz, *Charisma and Community: A Study of Religious Commitment within the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1987), xi or Thomas J. Csordas, *Language, Charisma, and Creativity: The Ritual Life of a Religious Movement* (Berkeley, CA: U of California, 1997), 41-43.

insufferable since she joined that darn group,” she ruminated angrily. But, she acknowledged to herself, that was not the only thing to change about Marge. A visible weight seemed to have been lifted off her shoulders. Marge was smiling more, enjoying life. “Oh, but it’s probably just some new man or something like that,” Susan thought dismissively. “She just needs me to support her.” Yet, other motives lurked under this stated one. Whether she would admit it or not, this mother of three was powerfully curious about the Charismatic Renewal. “Maybe, just maybe,” she half-acknowledges to herself, “there’s something to this after all.”

She arrives a little before the start of the gathering, pulling into the parking lot around 6:37 PM. After a few deep breaths gripping the steering wheel, Susan collects herself and enters the parish hall. She peeks her head through the door timidly, almost afraid to fully commit herself to attending this meeting she’s heard so much about.

“Is this your first time here?” another woman asks in a friendly tone, sensing her trepidation.

Susan can only manage a nod in the affirmative.

The other woman, obviously practiced at welcoming newcomers, motions for Susan to follow her into a side room. There, she and nine others receive a brief orientation. Their presenters, experienced members of the group, offer a broad overview of healing, tongues, prophecy, and, most importantly, hierarchical approval. “The Charismatic gifts allow us to live a more authentically Catholic life,” they explain. “Even the Pope approves of the Renewal!” After the presentation ends, its leaders shepherd their charges back to

the main parish hall. “Try to keep an open mind and don’t be afraid to let yourself respond to the Spirit,” they offer in parting.

Susan appraises her surroundings carefully. The parish hall is filled with chairs, around 120 of them, arranged in a semi-circle around a center stage. She carefully selects a chair near but not completely in the back. “Just like school,” she chuckles to herself. As the other participants begin to file in, our newcomers cannot help but marvel at their open warmth and affection for each other. “These people don’t even seem Catholic,” Susan exclaims silently as she watches group members hugging enthusiastically.

Indeed, such friendliness characterized the entire Movement, not just this particular prayer meeting. “Closeness and a desire to share with one another their joy is apparent at prayer meetings,” one University of Georgetown observer noted.²³ This expressive emotion became most visible during the Sign of Peace. Customarily a two-minute ritual of congregants avoiding eye contact and offering stiff handshakes to those around them, this part of the Mass became a veritable lovefest in the hands the Charismatics. “Kindly keep the sign of peace under 30 minutes,” one bishop gently reminded his priests, speaking to the enthusiasm with which Charismatics approached their task. It was as if they were trying to make the love of Christ incarnate in their warm embraces, and no one was exempt.

²³ “Love: Jesus People at Georgetown,” *Georgetown Hoya*, 13 Oct 1972; “Charismatics Offer Acceptance, Emotional Outlet,” *Catholic Tower*, 8 Oct 1976; Neitz, *Charisma and Community*, xi

“People move freely around the room to get to everyone,” one leader explained gleefully, “even ferret[ing] out some timid people who may be in the back.”²⁴

Visitors found this expressiveness endearing, if a little disconcerting. “Indeed to many an outsider,” explained psychologist William Sneck, “the first and lasting impression conveyed by participants in this charismatic community was their unfeigned joy in living.”²⁵ Such warmth gave pause even to the critics of the Movement. Methodist preacher Robert Johnson recalled his experience with the Catholic Pentecostals of Ann Arbor. He worried openly about the community’s future, taking issue with its overemphasis on tongues and disdain for the outside world. Towards their mission as a whole in society, he admitted, he felt a “general ambivalence.” Towards the people involved in this mission, however, he felt a great attachment. “I nonetheless found myself at home among Christian friends,” he concluded after his long list of theological critiques.²⁶ Befitting a devotion emphasizing the value of religious emotion, Charismatic friendliness was one of the Movement’s greatest assets, attracting those who might not have otherwise given a second thought to Pentecostalism.

This hospitality reassures Susan, as well. “This might just be something worth looking into,” she notes wordlessly and then laughs to herself. “Well, at least it’s cheaper

²⁴ “Liturgical Change in Mass: Optional Sign of Peace Proving Popular Among Roman Catholics,” *Los Angeles Times*, 23 June 1973

²⁵ William J. Sneck, “Neo-Pentecostals and Healing: A Phenomenological Approach to the Spiritual Gifts,” *The Way*, vol. 18, no. 4 (1978): 263; Thomas J. Chordas and Steven Jay Gross, “The Healing of Memories: Psychotherapeutic Ritual among Catholic Pentecostals,” *Journal of Pastoral Care*, Vol XXX, No. 4 (Dec 1976): 245-257

²⁶ *Varieties of Campus Ministries: Seven Case Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Church Society for College Work, 1973)

than therapy.” At that very moment, she finds herself buried, almost violently, in a hug. It was Marge!

“I’m so excited that you’ve come!” she exclaims. “You must sit with me!”

Susan can only nod and smile as Marge introduces her to friendly face after friendly face. Smiles surround her. A pleasant buzzing begins to fill her head, the kind that subtly drowns out all of Susan’s conscious thoughts and doubts.

Soon, a different sound is ringing in her ears. Guitars sing out; tambourines beat against thighs in rhythm. This signals the start of praise-and-worship. Singing in church is nothing new to Susan (she even sang in the church choir), but not like this. All around her, she sees, Charismatics are belting out the lyrics joyfully, raising their arms heavenward, as if they were trying to get just that much closer to their Lord and Savior. The housewife hears muffled weeping all around her, but not of sadness. People are crying and Margie is bawling, but in this strange, sort of blissful way. The tears have a way of adding to the music and the singing instead of taking away from it. The mother of three feels even more out of place as the singing progressed. As song bleeds into song, the lyrics seem to disappear. People are still praising, but in a strange sort of humming and jibberish. It is like an ocean of sound, with notes rising and falling and swirling around her. There is a definite progression, a purposefulness to the movement, even if Susan cannot quite sense where it is leading. She feels it building and building and building and then, all of a sudden, it stops. The whole congregation is silent, breathless, waiting in anticipation for what would come next.

Charismatics were known not only for their joyful greetings, but also their joyous singing. “The temptation was at first strong to write off the more zealous participants as frustrated actors,” one Georgetown student confessed.²⁷ “One young man,” reported a college newspaper incredulously, “knelt for the duration of the hour-and-a-half long meeting, rocking back and forth, with his hands turned upward in front of himself, continually saying, ‘Praise you, Jesus,’ and ‘Thank you, Jesus.’”²⁸ Though relatively tame by Pentecostal standards, such worship exhibited an emotionalism foreign to middle-class U.S. Catholicism.²⁹ The choice of music also set Charismatics apart. They embraced contemporary Christian music, making their song choice more similar to a Protestant congregation than a Catholic one. Thus, the tenor and tune of Charismatic worship differentiated them from typical devotions, making their meetings somewhat intimidating (and sometimes invigorating) for Catholic laypeople.

As did tongues. The most sensationalized of all the charismatic gifts, speaking in tongues sounded like complete gibberish to the untrained ear. “Fala hada chok haddahada sogoshnia,” wrote one Charismatic trying to put the sounds on the page. Such mutterings, they believed, conveyed praise beyond praise, prayers so heartfelt and genuine that the power of human language failed to suffice. Tongues took on a particularly important role in group worship. As the lyrics of a song would fade away and the musicians kept the

²⁷ “Catholic Fanaticism? Pentecostals: A New Dimension,” *Georgetown Hoya*, 28 Jan 1972

²⁸ “Charismatic Prayer Meeting Aid in Promoting Religious Revival,” *Catholic Tower*, 15 Mar 1973

²⁹ “Pentecostalism Gets Catholic Bishops’ OK”; Emotionalism was quite visible, however, in the proceedings of the immigrant Church or the poor Church. For examples, see Robert Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street* and *Thank You, St. Jude*.

melody playing, one observer reported, “the air would be filled first with a strange buzz and then eerie harmonies as the sounds became musical, formed into chords and finally died away.”³⁰ Charismatics themselves often commented on the otherworldly, almost celestial sound of collective tongues. “I literally thought there were angels in the room or I was in heaven,” related John Flaherty enthusiastically. “They sang together *a capella* in harmonies that floated in every direction, weaving in and out of each other like colored smoke over a blazing fire. I had never heard singing so lovely, so enchanting, so...peace creating,” he recalled. “We described it as being in the presence of God,” he concluded. “I look back and think that maybe we were.”³¹

Charismatics justified this style of worship Biblically, referencing the second book of Samuel and Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians. True Christians, they contended, should be willing to look like fools for the sake of the Lord. What other lesson were they to take from the story of 2 Samuel 6: 1-23, the tale of David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant? God sometimes required things of his believers that flew in the face of earthly wisdom, and tongues was simply a continuation of this. Other parts of the Bible, moreover, explicitly endorsed the practices of tongues. According to 1 Cor 12: 5-11,

To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to

³⁰ “20,000 Catholic Pentecostals Meet, Urging Church Support”

³¹ John Flaherty, “Death of a Prayer Meeting,” last updated 2011, accessed 15 Nov 2015, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/51097723/Death-Of-A-Prayer-Meeting>

another interpretations of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individual to each person as he wishes.³²

Speaking in tongues, based on this list, should play at least some part in the Church's life. Charismatics emphasized this fact in conversations with other, more skeptical Catholics. Tongues, just like spiritual wisdom or musical talent, was an integral part of the faith, making up just one part of the glorious diversity that was the Body of Christ.

Despite these arguments, however, tongue-speakers tended to see tongues as the most foundational of all gifts. Faith, healing, knowledge, prophecy, and mighty deeds were all important in the spiritual life, they believed, but one could have none of these without having tongues first. This spiritual language, so counterintuitive and controversial, required an absolute trust in the will of God. "Every Christian has the potential to be filled with the Holy Spirit," explained one lay leader of the necessity of tongues, "but it is essential that he yield to it."³³ Practicing tongues thus became an integral part of any other spiritual gift, as it cultivated the trust and giving up of control. Charismatics promoted such ideas in their devotional literature. "If you are unwilling to receive gift of tongues," the *Life in the Spirit* seminars explained to Movement newcomers, "you are putting a block on the Lord's work and the Holy Spirit will not be free to work fully in you."³⁴ Pentecostal Catholics equated outer behavior with inner disposition. An inability to speak in tongues

³² 1 Cor 12: 4-11

³³ "Renewal Seen in Pentecost"

³⁴ J. Massyngberde Ford, *Which Way for Catholic Pentecostals?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 36; 'Tongues' as Proof of Holy Spirit Doubted: Loyola University President Says True Signs Are in Transformation of One's Life," *Los Angeles Times*, Jul 15, 1972; "Charismatics' Gain in Churches: 'Charismatic Renewal' is Flourishing," *New York Times*, 8 Sept 1974

spoke to a lack of trust in the Lord, an unwillingness to “let go and let God.” Charismatics thus portrayed this spiritual gift as a fundamental part of one’s spiritual life, the key to moving forward in the spiritual journey.

Susan, in the meantime, is learning something else about divine providence. After the singing of songs and exhibition of tongues, the meeting takes a different tone. Person after person begins walking up to the front of the assembly, all ready to share their testimony. “I lived the life of an agnostic,” one young man recalls, doing “little...that was uniquely Christian.” This detachment had suited him just fine, he explained, right up until he had come into “the worst depression of [his] life.” In the midst of such darkness and despair, “all I could pray was ‘Lord, I trust you. Help me soon.’” That help came in his first visit to a Charismatic prayer group. “Hands were laid on me, and though I didn’t receive tongues the first night, so many things began happening that week that I was reassured beyond doubt of the power of the Holy Spirit,” he remembers.³⁵ As soon as he finishes, another, older man steps up to the podium. “Between 1965 and 1971,” he declares, “I was aware of Jesus, and it was a very beautiful experience, but at times it was a struggle being a Christian.” He continues, explaining that “I was still in the world, it was so much around me, with pressure to have money and drive a fancy car.” Everything had changed, he explains, after he became involved in the Renewal. “After 1971, nothing has had the same priority. First comes Jesus, then my family, and third my business and the

³⁵ “Renewal Seen in Pentecost”

community.”³⁶ Two to three more witnesses follow, each offering similar recollections of how and when the Spirit came into their lives

Such raw emotionality leaves Susan speechless. Sure, she had heard personal testimonies before, but mostly about a new diet, trip to Europe, or, at its most extreme, a membership for Amway. As these Charismatics were baring their souls, however, it felt like they were speaking directly to her own. Was she also living the life of an agnostic, doing so little to make faith the foundation of her life? Did she put Jesus first in everything? Did she not struggle, as well, with feelings of inadequacy and self-loathing, particularly when thinking about parenting her children? Couched in such personal experience, these spiritual questions were building and building inside of Susan’s soul, and beginning to gnaw at her formerly complacent Catholicism.

Charismatics attached a special value to testimony. They shared it almost compulsively, never missing an opportunity to witness to what Christ had done in their lives. Most of the time, this took place in the context of personal relationships, as those baptized in the Spirit described their experiences to friends, family, co-workers, even acquaintances. Many gave this testimony almost compulsively, scarcely able to speak of anything else. Occasionally, they looked for more public venues to share their story. One newly-minted Charismatic, for example, pleaded with her parish priest to let her have the altar before the closing announcements of the Mass, so that she might be able to win more souls for Christ. Others tried to evangelize through the written, and not necessarily spoken,

³⁶ “The Charismatics: New Catholic Groups Adopt Non-Regulation Worship Style”

word. “Many friends, like ourselves, were close to leaving the Church before becoming active in the Movement,” Mike and Judie Kelly wrote in to the *National Catholic Reporter* of how much they had benefitted from the Movement. “There is no question in our minds it was a gift from God.”³⁷ In this variety of venues, therefore, Charismatics hoped to spread the Good News of Christ just like the early Apostles, through a powerful and emotional witness.

Certain aspects of Pentecostal theology shaped the way Catholics presented these stories. They emphasized a singular moment of conversion, often a believer’s first experience speaking in tongues. This idea of a “salvation experience” contrasted sharply with Catholic tradition.³⁸ As evidenced by Reconciliation and the rest of the Sacraments, Catholics tended to take the long view of spirituality. The spiritual life was more Augustine than Pauline, more likely to be a pilgrimage undertaken throughout a lifetime than something that resolved in a single flash of light. Witnessing also emphasized the value of personalized relationship. Charismatics spoke of Jesus, God, and the Spirit in intimate terms. The conversion experience often hinged on this shift. “The Spirit freely given to us,” national Charismatic figure Kevin Ranaghan explained, “is not some vague, illusive ether stirring in the recesses of our mind...[but] the personal presence of God, the Spirit of the victorious risen Lord, indwelling, empowering, energizing, and directing the life of

³⁷ “Charismatics: The Readers’ Response,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, Oct 17, 1975; “Charismatics Offer Acceptance, Emotional Outlet”; “Renewal Seen in Pentecost”; “Charismatic Catholics Encounter a Degree of Coolness”; “Debate...on Charismatic Renewal,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 5 Sept 1975

³⁸ Fitcher, *The Catholic Cult of the Paraclete*, 32, 46; Edward O’Connor, “When the Clouds of Glory Dissipate,” *New Catholic World* (Nov/Dec 1974)

every Christian.” Other Charismatics detailed the experience similarly, with one priest noting that “knowing Jesus Christ as Lord is like the difference between knowing who President Ford is and knowing him as a personal friend.”³⁹ A sudden, personal relationship thus lay at the heart of Charismatic conversion, leading to a complete change in worldview.

As the meeting continued, the suburban housewife’s desire for answers only grew. Various group members, including Marge, are now standing at the front of the assembly. “Anyone who wishes can come up to receive prayers for healing,” an unknown person announces through the hall’s PA system. Susan gapes as she observes those in need of healing. Some openly sport physical deformities or other injuries, but others appear perfectly healthy. Why are these people walking, and not limping down to the front? Though too timid to go up herself, the mother of three watches and listens with an intense curiosity.

Susan fixates her attention on those without obvious outer problems. She can just make out the words exchanged between two of the women. The problem had to do with anxiety, she gathered, particularly in relation to finding a husband. “God is just placing this on my heart right now,” the first is telling the second. “He says that you are afraid of the love that He has in store for you. You need to openly yourself up to that love, to really and truly trust what He has in store for you.” She then offers Biblical evidence as proof of this plea. “Remember what the Bible says, ‘Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard what God has ready for those who love him.’ The Lord really wants you to know that and believe

³⁹ “The Charismatics: New Catholic Groups Adopt Non-Regulation Worship Style”

that right now, that He has a man out there for you and you cannot even begin to imagine how perfect he will be for you.” The other woman is bawling freely at this point. Both join in deep, heartfelt prayer, no longer communicating through intelligible words, but sharing in tongues together.⁴⁰

Susan wonders at the strangeness of such words. This woman spoke about God not as an abstract force in the universe, but as if He was a personal friend who offered great advice on other people’s problems. It sounded crazy. It sounded ridiculous. But she sounded so self-assured. Was this woman actually talking to God? How else could one explain her startling insight into the personal problems of others? Or the profound effect it seemed to have on others?

Charismatics placed great value on the ministry of healing. Though sometimes prayers to God revolved around broken ankles and physical deformities, they generally focused on broken souls or perennial depression. Participants believed that, if God was truly alive today, he would naturally be willing to heal people. This is what happened in the Gospels, after all. Healing was one of the ways that the Apostles and Jesus attracted people to the true faith, as well as one of the ways in which the abstract realities of the divine became personally known to us today.⁴¹ God wanted his people to be healed, explained Dominican priest Francis MacNutt. “I was never able to accept the fact that

⁴⁰ Based loosely on description provided in Neitz, *Charisma and Community*, xxi

⁴¹ “Mother Angelica & Abbot David Geraets, OSB on EWTN,” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated 27 Oct 2011, accessed 13 Mar 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAIN45izBCY&list=PL443B4AB73CA592FC>; “Catholic Healing Service a Success,” *Washington Post*, June 21, 1974; Fichter, *The Catholic Cult of the Paraclete*, 128

psychological sickness was God's will for a suffering individual; it was destructive, not redemptive."⁴² With this healing present and given to us freely, he believed, the only thing people needed to do was to be willing to receive it.

This belief influenced the Charismatic healing ministry in three ways. First, it gave them confidence in what they were able to achieve. Charismatics truly believed that they were able to heal people's hurts, not through their own power and not always instantaneously, but by allowing God's love to flow through them and into the suffering of another. This confidence was perhaps the most visible in the populations targeted by believers. The Charismatics of Ann Arbor, for example, were known for visiting local cancer wards and Emergency Rooms. If God could work miracles, they reasoned, he could work them among the most hopeless of cases.⁴³ This divine assurance led some into secular science. How could people still remain unhealed when God wanted them healed? Just as with tongues and the BoHS, interior resistance was thought to be the culprit. The wisdom of counseling, explained Fr. MacNutt, helped the sick and suffering better reject the lies and deceptions that prevented them from accepting God's healing love.⁴⁴ Occasionally, such a belief led Charismatics to blame the sick for their sickness. Anyone who was not healed, the reasoning went, was actively or subconsciously resisting the will of God. Charismatics had trouble explaining this logic to ordinary laypeople, often giving the

⁴² Fr. Francis MacNutt, "The Inner Healing of Our Emotional Problems," *New Covenant*, May 1974: 3-6

⁴³ *Pecos Benedictine*, March 1974

⁴⁴ "Spiritual Healing Gaining Ground with Catholics and Episcopalians," *New York Times*, June 28, 1974; David Geraets, O.S.B. *Baptism of Suffering* (Pecos, NM: Dove Publications, 1970)

impression that they alone were responsible for their illness, that their faith was not genuine enough to be healed. These tendencies led the hospitals of Ann Arbor to ban Charismatics from the premise, so sick were they of failed healings. They only brought guilt, the physicians claimed, not the grace of God.⁴⁵ Regardless of public acceptance, however, healing prayer played a large role in the prayer meeting.

In healing and other activities alike, Catholic Pentecostals were well-known for their peculiar style of language. “Praise the name above all names!” one might exclaim in a gathering, only to be answered by a chorus of “Praise God!”⁴⁶ Expressions similar to this permeated the Charismatic Renewal. “Thank you Jesus...you are the Alpha and the Omega,” another might pray with gratitude.⁴⁷ Such exclamations even carried outside the prayer meeting. “Cheers!” one reporter called out when toasting a group of the tongue-speakers. “...to the Lord!” they added in their reply.⁴⁸ These were more than just words of praise, however, but words of confidence. Charismatics readily attributed feelings, instincts, and desires to the Lord, seeing his hand behind a sudden urge to pray for another or open to a certain book of the Scriptures. “Providential!” one member exclaimed upon seeing a much-needed gas station, “I truly believe it is clearly and unmistakably an act of God for this filling station to be open.”⁴⁹ Given their experiences with the BoHS, tongues,

⁴⁵ “Charismatics V: What Tapes Tell about Sex Roles, Healing, Prophecy,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, Sept 19, 1975

⁴⁶ “The Charismatics: New Catholic Groups Adopt Non-Regulation Worship Style”

⁴⁷ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

⁴⁸ “Charismatics III: In Bar or Car, Praise the Lord,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, Sept 5, 1975

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

and healing, many Charismatics truly believed that God played an active role in their lives, influencing everything from the economy to traffic lights. They reshaped their language to convey this belief, as it properly attributed good things to their divine source.

Outsiders generally bristled at such words of confidence. At times, it made others feel inadequate. “One’s first thought is, ‘What am I doing here?’” explained one Georgetown University student. “I feel like a pagan mixed in with these people who are so free in vocalizing their faith.”⁵⁰ It made others feel more uneasy than anything else. God could and did work through everyday life, one Michigan priest conceded, but rarely could believers see it with such clarity. He expressed his exasperation with the oft-repeated phrase, “The Lord told me...” “99% of the time,” the priest wrote bitterly, “that which is merely a human judgement is characterized as if it were the Lord’s all-powerful and holy Word.” He took issue with the finality of such a statement. Not only did it give personal opinion an unwarranted weight, but it shut down any productive discussion. After all, who wanted to argue with God? Such connotations, the Catholic shepherd explained, only exacerbated the tension between Charismatics and their Catholic brethren. “The unspoken assumption,” he continued, “is all too often that only charismatics can utter the prophetic word and that non-charismatics are only speaking in the Lord by an exception to the general rule.”⁵¹ In this way, language served as a stumbling block as well as a strength for the

⁵⁰ “Catholic Fanaticism?”

⁵¹ *Varieties of Campus Ministries*

Renewal. The willingness of the Charismatics to praise and glorify God attracted some, whereas their confidence when speaking about Him alienated others.

At this point in the meeting, Susan is more confused than anything else. The prayers for healing had ended; something entirely new is beginning. At first, our newcomer thinks this is just another session of praise-and-worship, hearing the guitarist begin softly strumming their chords. The most interesting aspect of this new singing, however, is not so much of what happened during the songs, but rather in the interludes between. One man, Bible in hand, stands up suddenly. “Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect,” he proclaims, quoting Romans 12:2 for the assembled congregants. A collective murmuring ensues, with people nodding their heads in approval.

Another song brings another proclamation. This time, a woman cries out in tongues, making herself heard even over the congregation. “Bal Li Ode Da Ma Ta Las Si Ta No Ma,” she communicates loudly.⁵² The crowd again turns in upon itself, with people looking around as if expecting an answer. All of a sudden, another voice rings out, apparently offering an interpretation of these tongues. “My children, I love you,” exclaims

⁵² Pulled from “Speaking in Tongues,” 29 Sept 1991, Grace to You, last updated 2016, accessed 14 April 2016, <https://www.gty.org/resources/sermons/90-61/Speaking-in-Tongues>

a woman from a different part of the assembly. “I love you, for I am your God. Follow me and I will show you the glory of my love.”⁵³

A third outburst occurs, but this time directly from the podium. Susan whips her head around; these proclamations seem to be coming from every part of the parish hall! This speaker appears to be in more of an official capacity, at least judging from his microphone and suit-and-tie. He clears his throat and begins his own message to the congregation:

My love exceeds all you can imagine, My love for you. How much I give to all who ask. Do not be too proud to come for help. I am with you always—just waiting for your surrender, your ‘yes.’ Come, come to Me. Live a new life of trust. Hope will keep you joyful. You will see the fruits of My Spirit blossom and grow in your hearts. You will know Me. And in Me, My Father. And in Me, My Spirit. And in Me, all your brothers. How I long for you to know—to live in Me.⁵⁴

After this message, the assembly quiets down quite a bit. Susan feels somewhat unsteady. Though she had been warned about “prophecy” at the brief orientation before the meeting, it is disconcerting to hear other people as if they were God. Susan was used to hearing the Bible and the Gospels especially in church, but this is something else entirely. There is something disconcerting, yet immensely powerful, in hearing the words spoken directly to her, as if God was physically present in their midst.

Charismatic prophecy, though perhaps not as prevalent as tongues, still formed an important part of ritual life within the Renewal. If the Spirit moved just as in ancient times,

⁵³ Quoted in Csordas, *Language, Charisma, Creativity*, 173; See also Neitz, *Charisma and Community*, xvii

⁵⁴ Mansfield, *As by a New Pentecost*, 49

these neo-Pentecostals reasoned, should not the prophets return as well? Prophecies, though delivered by men and women, were thought to communicate the will of God to the congregation. These messages could take three forms. Sometimes, they came in the guise of a Bible verse, “placed” on one’s heart in the midst of the prayer meeting. The verse would relate something important to those gathered together, perhaps a word of encouragement. A similar process took place with the interpretation of tongues. Here, one believer translated the tongues of another, using divine wisdom to make the words intelligible to the congregation. Finally, prophecies could arise through direct inspiration of the Spirit. Spoken in the vernacular, they also were thought to say something about God’s plan for the assembled. Generally, these messages touched on one of two topics, either “pious platitudes about God’s love [or] sometimes stern exhortations to abide by ‘God’s will’ or warnings almost apocalyptic in their severity.”⁵⁵ Regardless of the form of the prophecies, Charismatics believed them to be messages sent from heaven, mediated through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prophecy became a contentious domain within some prayer groups. In the early days of the Renewal, just about anyone could get up and share what the Lord had been telling him/her. This dynamic changed, however, as the result of bad experiences. Sometimes, people used the platform to air personal grudges, elevating personal criticism to the level of the divine. Other times, the practice lead to open heresy. A group of classical

⁵⁵ *Varieties of Campus Ministries*; “Charismatic Communities,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, Sept 12, 1975; Fichter, *The Catholic Cult of the Paraclete*, 124.

Pentecostals had invaded a Catholic prayer meeting in New Orleans, for example, storming the stage to denigrate the Virgin Mary and question official Church teaching.⁵⁶ These instances led many of the larger Charismatic groups to institute a vetting process. They limited live prophecy to “mature Christians,” often persons with established track records and impeccable personal commitments to the group. Other prognostications might be accepted from the congregation, but usually in writing.⁵⁷ This way, groups managed the tension caused by the Movement, balancing a need for authority with room for the free expression of the Spirit.

Prophecy also illustrated the seemingly chaotic nature of Charismatic worship. Visitors often expressed their surprise at the lack of apparent structure in the prayer meeting. Not seeing any official programs or even set list of songs for the musicians, they wondered how it could all hold together.⁵⁸ Imagine the surprise that spontaneous Bible readings must have generated among Catholics, particularly given the ritualized nature of the Roman Church. Scripture readings, within Catholic tradition, vary not based on the individual wishes of the leader nor the whims of the community, but rigidly according to a three-year liturgical schedule. Catholics heard the same reading no matter where they were in the world, as worship was thought to illustrate the unity of the Body of Christ. They

⁵⁶ Fichter, *The Catholic Cult of the Paraclete*, 124

⁵⁷ Ibid; “Charismatic Communities”; “All Things Under Christ” Catholic Charismatic Conference, October 19-21, 1984, Liturgy (1954-1995), Committees and Conferences (1954-1984), Catholic Charismatic Conferences (1983, 1984), Roman Catholic Diocese of Austin, Austin, Texas

⁵⁸ “Pentecostals Celebrate Belief in Atmosphere of Love, Unity,” *Catholic Tower*, 11 Dec 1970; “‘Charismatics’ Gain in Churches”; Fichter, “How it Looks to a Social Scientist”

wondered at the purpose of such unstructured praise. “This lack of structure seems to stimulate spontaneous expression of feelings,” hypothesized one newspaper.⁵⁹ Again, reactions to this practice were mixed. Some Catholics loved the change, as it distanced them from the overly reverential atmosphere of pre-Vatican II; others despised it, wanting “to make [worship] a bit more consistent...giv[ing] it not Latinate distance, but reverential solemnity.”⁶⁰

Charismatics themselves attached practical and theological significance to this freedom. It allowed for a greater sense of community within the meeting. The stiff worship style of American Catholics did not foster strong social relationships, one student of the University of Southern California remarked. The Charismatic practices “[broke] up the formality of the Mass; you meet people who you might not normally talk to.”⁶¹ The free-flowing liturgy had a deeper importance, as well. Emphasizing the importance of responding to the Spirit, Catholic Pentecostals hesitated to commit themselves to any sort of rigid structure. “I am **not** in favor of restricting the manifestations of the Spirit to [a scheduled prayer activity],” Fr. Andrew Miles explained in 1999. “It’s like saying: ‘OK Holy Spirit, you’ve got this much time once a day to ‘do your thing.’ You’d better do it quick because that’s all the time you get.’ I know there must be order and structure in community prayer, but let’s not structure the Holy Spirit into a box.”⁶² These concerns

⁵⁹ “Love: Jesus People at Georgetown”

⁶⁰ “Is the Catholic Mass in Need of a Facelift?” *The Heights*, 21 Jan 1986

⁶¹ “Liturgical Change in Mass”

⁶² Fr. Andrew Miles, “Comments on the Statement of Abbot Jean Baptiste,” 11 Nov 1999, Box 2, Charismatic Elements Pecos, Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery, Pecos, NM, 87552

thus motivated Charismatics to keep organization and structures to a minimum, at least during the early years of the Renewal.

As the prophecies and praise subside, Susan sees a man from the audience step forward onto the center podium. He begins speaking on forgiveness, particularly within the context of the prayer group. Drawing on Biblical passages as frequently as popular psychology, he explains the perils of hatred and resentment. These feelings distracted believers from the pursuit of God, making them only concerned with getting restitution. Hatred was not of God; only peace was of God. The speaker offers the story of Peter and Judas as an example of this phenomenon. Both had betrayed Christ, he notes, and both had felt incredible remorse. Only Peter, however, received forgiveness. First of all, he had to forgive himself. Unlike Judas, he did not commit suicide, an act speaking to complete inner despair. Peter repented, acknowledging his wrong-doing but refusing to be consumed by it. This recommitment, even in the face of failure, was what had allowed Peter to become the first Pope. Yet, Peter's forgiveness also had a communal dimension. The other apostles and disciples had to excuse Peter's past faults, even knowing that he had openly denied them and Christ. Only after the resolution of this conflict could the Holy Spirit begin to work in their lives. If the disciples had not have forgiven Peter, the speaker notes, there would not have been a Pentecost. True communion and companionship allowed the

Spirit to flow freely, with harmony making possible the first ever Baptisms of the Holy Spirit.⁶³

Susan is floored by the content and delivery of the message. She had never heard any layperson talk about the spiritual life before, and certainly never with such confidence. Such content was the domain of priests, not of the laity. It is refreshing, even encouraging for her to hear such words coming from the mouth of someone so similar to herself. Even the clergy in the audience (one or two priests, a cluster of nuns) seem to appreciate the talk. The Biblical emphasis is new, as well. “I mean, I know it is the foundation of our faith,” Susan admits to herself, “but that was the first time I have seen it as relevant to my life today.” She begins to wonder what other treasures the Bible might hold, thinking to herself for the first time in her life that she might benefit from reading the Good Book.

Charismatic teachings illustrated two broader characteristics of the Renewal. First, they demonstrated the extreme importance these neo-Pentecostals attached to the Bible. Catholics were typically known for their devotion to the saints, and not the Gospels. These were people raised on stories of St. George and the Dragon or St. Lawrence being roasted over a fire. They could list the names and deeds of hundreds of holy men and women, but not the majority of books of the Bible. Charismatics turned this paradigm on its head. They read the Good Book hungrily, often finishing the entire thing within a matter of weeks. This enthusiasm stemmed from their trust in the Holy Spirit. If God was fully alive

⁶³ Culled from Neitz, *Charisma and Community*, xv; Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Dreams: God Speaking to Us Today,” 2003, “Holiness is Inner Wholeness,” 1979, and “Let Us Forgive and Love Each Other,” 2001, talks given at the Southern California Renewal Communities Conference, Van Nuys, CA

today and wanted us to come to know Him more fully, the reasoning went, what better place to encounter Christ than through the pages His spirit had inspired? The Bible thus became an integral part of Charismatic spiritual and secular life.⁶⁴

The BoHS affected more than just the frequency of Bible reading, however. Charismatics tended towards Biblical literalism, or the belief that the words of the Bible spoke for themselves. “Bible study,” one scholar noted, “means looking for the most evident and literal meaning of the words of the biblical passage, not exegesis.”⁶⁵ What this meant, practically, is that Charismatics tended to see the Bible as something that was 1) was literally true and 2) relevant to today. Moses really had parted the Red Sea, many held, just as God had physically rained down fire on Sodom and Gomorrah or Jesus had healed the sick and suffering and cast out demons. The Charismatics worried openly about the effects of “modern” Biblical criticism, the kind that saw the actions of God and Jesus as metaphors for the spiritual journey. Where did the critical analysis stop, they wondered, and what would that mean for their own experiences of miracles and tongues and other things described in the Book of Acts? Exposure to spiritual realities, therefore, predisposed Charismatics to believe in the literal truth of the Bible, even some of its more outlandish passages. They came to Biblical relevance through similar logic. Neo-Pentecostals had experienced the movements of the Spirit, the very Spirit that had inspired the writers of the

⁶⁴ Paul Nogaró, “The Pentecostal Movement Within the Catholic Church,” *Aurora Christi*, vol. 9 (1970): 22-34; “Scholar Sees Charismatic-Catholic Clash: Neo-Pentecostal ‘Born-Again’ View Expected to Stir Conflict,” *Los Angeles Times*, 31 Dec 1977; See, for example, several stories in Mansfield, *As By a New Pentecost*

⁶⁵ “Scholar Sees Charismatic-Catholic Clash”

Bible. How much of a leap was it to believe that, if God could use humanity to write something thousands of years ago, He could also use His Spirit to make sure it was applicable to the world of today? God's power knew no bounds. With this perspective, these neo-Pentecostals looked to Biblical passages and stories for advice on adjusting to the modern world.

Such an understanding affected Charismatic perceptions of gender roles. Unlike the majority of Americans and even Catholics in the 1970s, Pentecostal Catholics reaffirmed the traditional roles of men and women. Men were supposed to lead, most believed, and women to submit. After all, they reasoned, had not Paul spoke about such issues in his Epistles, advising men to hold responsibility over their wives?⁶⁶ These, in addition to other books of the Bible, helped justify the attitude and leadership of prayer groups. Men tended to be the ones in charge of organization and teaching. These rules were not hard and fast (at least not in the early Renewal), but the majority of Charismatics supported this arrangement based on Biblical grounds.⁶⁷

This attention to Biblical origins was also visible in the predominance of lay leadership. The early Apostles and Disciples, Charismatics no doubt noted, were not priests or nuns, but simply people who had been inspired by the teachings of Christ. This Biblical pattern, when coupled with the new enthusiasm of the Charismatics and general reluctance of priests and religious to participate, made prayer meetings quite distinct from

⁶⁶ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

⁶⁷ "Charismatic Movement Leans to Women's Role," *Dallas Morning News*, 4 Mar 1978

the rest of Catholic life. Most of the leadership and teaching duties were carried out by laypeople, not priests. Many Catholics found this trend refreshing, as it gave the messages an immediacy and approachability sometimes lacking from the Sunday homily. “I think people find it easier to grow when they see another lay person leading,” one participant claimed. “Before, I think we were taught the clergy were way up high and we were just the peons in doing the work of Christ...the wall is being broken down slowly.”⁶⁸ The shared experience of the Renewal weakened these walls even further. “Both ‘Praise the Lord!’ and the willingness of the unordained and the young to challenge the clergy were commonplace here,” one observer noted of a regional conference in Los Angeles.⁶⁹ The Renewal seemed to put religious and laity on a more equal footing than in the past, a trend visible in most post-Vatican II spiritual developments.

Susan, of course, knows none of this. All she knows is that, as the meeting stretches later and later into the night, she does not want it to end. The praise, healing, and teaching are touching her like nothing has for a very long time, giving her a strangely warm, fuzzy, light-headed feeling. Maybe, just maybe, there is something more to this than just kooky emotionalism, Susan half-acknowledges. As the meeting and music winds down, she finds herself gravitating towards the groups of Charismatics chatting outside the sanctuary. They are warm and welcoming, encouraging her to come back for another meeting. By the time Marge approaches to ask about carpooling the following week, Susan has already made up

⁶⁸ “Laity Assuming Bigger Role in Catholic Church”

⁶⁹ “20,000 Catholic Pentecostals Meet, Urging Church Support”

her mind. “I’d like that,” she says almost before Marge finishes her proposal. “I’d like that very much.”

This process appears to have played out across the nation in the 1970s. Prayer groups helped attract ever-growing numbers of Catholics to the Movement, with national membership peaking at just under one million by 1980. These intimate gatherings, so full of warmth and worship, seemed to help break through the resistance many had to the otherwise foreign practices of faith healing and speaking in tongues. Charismatic leaders openly acknowledged this fact, seeing the value of their emotional appeals over rational ones. Evangelization sometimes involved going up to strangers and knocking on random doors, explained layman Terry Malone in 1975, but “for the most part...it is indirect, a witness of their lifestyle and the way they relate.” Charismatics knew that, simply by bringing people to their meetings, they were letting the Spirit do the evangelizing, and God the converting. “Happiness makes people wonder,” Malone concluded simply.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Terry Malone, “Ignatius House: An Experiment in Pentecostal Community,” *New Catholic World* (Nov/Dec 1974)

CHAPTER 3: “POWER AT PECOS”: *THE FORMATION OF A PENTECOSTAL MONASTERY*

The growing success of the Charismatic Renewal brought changes even to the most unlikely of places, such as Pecos, New Mexico. The small town, just east of Santa Fe, was also home to a small monastery, Our Lady of Guadalupe. Originally founded by Trappist monks, the religious foundation had come under the aegis of Abbot Richard Felix and St. Benedict’s Abbey in 1955. Felix hoped Pecos would be yet another in his string of monastic ventures, intending to spiritually renew areas traditionally lacking in Catholic clergy. The priory¹ attempted to foster such a renewal through retreat ministry. It invited local families to take a break from the hectic pace of modern life, instead joining in the structured spirituality of monastic worship. These retreats brought temporal, and not just eternal, benefits, becoming the priory’s main source of funding. They also increased the foundation’s stature in the region. By the early 1960s, Pecos had positioned itself on the cutting edge of Catholic retreat ministry, facilitating popular experiences like *Cursillos de Cristianidad* and Marriage Encounter Weekends.² Such activities thus came to define

¹ A priory is a dependent foundation of a monastery, not having enough men or funding to warrant juridical independence.

² Kristy Nabhan-Warren, *The Cursillo Movement in America: Catholics, Protestants, and Fourth-Day Spirituality* (Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 67; Colman J. Barry, “The Bicentennial Revisited,” *The Catholic Historical Review*, vol. 63, no. 3 (July 1977): 369-391; “Pecos Independent: An Abbey,” *Benet Lake News and Views*, June/July 1973; “Two Currents,” *Benet Lake News and Views*, Oct-Nov 1973; “Abbot David’s Retirement – Pt 1,” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated Jan 19, 2012, accessed Mar 13, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuZuBKSmsts>; Victorine Fenton, *The English Monastic Liturgy of the Hours in North America, Vol I-III (Benedictine, Cistercian, Trappist)* (Iowa City: The University of Iowa, 1985), 1007; For a more detailed history of the pre-Benedictine past, see Fr. Martinus Cawley, O.C.S.O., *Guadalupe’s Pecos Years: Histoy of Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey During its Formative Years at Pecos, New Mexico, 1948-1955* (Lafayette, OR: Guadalupe Translations, 2001)

Pecos' existence, providing the bulk of monastic work in addition to the majority of monastic income.

By the late 1960s, however, these retreats were driving Pecos to the point of bankruptcy. The monastery's growth had depended upon attracting ever-increasing numbers of retreatants, a daunting challenge for any foundation, much less one in the midst of a desert. As the novelty of *Cursillos* and Encounter weekends faded, there was no question of thriving: Our Lady of Guadalupe was struggle just to survive. Fewer and fewer retreatants arrived each year. Without any comparable source of revenue, the foundation teetered on the edge of financial insolvency. This inability to sustain itself, in addition to the sudden illness of Pecos' superior Fr. Bernard Burbach, made the Benedictines of Benet Lake doubtful of its future. Abbot Andrew Garber and his subordinates had no desire to support a failing priory, either monetarily or vocationally. They were contemplating the monastery's closure by 1968, so pessimistic were they about its future.³ Thus would the story of Pecos have ended, leaving a brief and negligible impact on American Catholicism.

The situation could not have been more different in 1974, as something of a miracle had taken place at the small desert monastery. Our Lady of Guadalupe was literally overflowing with guests, with 50-90 visiting each weekend and 150 every Monday through Friday. The monks estimated that somewhere around 10,000 people had stayed with them during that year alone! Instead of waiting around, there were waiting lists. People were

³ "Two Currents,"; "Pecos Independent: An Abbey"

reserving their retreatant spots “as far in advance as one year.”⁴ How could the situation have changed so dramatically at Pecos, and so quickly too? Brought by the monks from Benet Lake, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal dramatically changed life at the monastery, re-organizing community life according to the spirit of Vatican II and revitalizing the foundation as a center for retreat ministry.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE ABBEY: THE WORLD’S FIRST PENTECOSTAL MONASTERY

The Charismatics of Benet Lake had seen the floundering of Pecos as an opportunity. Though Abbot Garber had maintained the peace at St. Benedict’s, Geraets and his Spirit-filled brothers remained wary. Too much depended on preserving the peace, they grumbled, and not enough on spreading His peace. The Charismatics wanted greater opportunities to evangelize those around them and even those outside the monastic enclosure. Also, they worried about the tenuous truce brokered at the Abbey. How long would it last, they wondered, especially given the larger numbers of those opposed to the Renewal? Such considerations led Fr. David Geraets and his ilk to begin contemplating a life outside of Benet Lake. Wanting to remain obedient to authority, however, they maintained open lines of communication with the Abbot, frequently discussing their plans for the future. By 1968, Pecos was becoming more and more attractive of an opportunity. Not only was the monastery struggling financially and vocationally, but it had also shown promise Pentecostally. Fr. Henry Nurre, the superior of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the

⁴ “Pecos Pentecostal Abbey,” *Benet Lake News and Views*, Oct-Nov 1973; Mary Ann Jahr, “The First Pentecostal Abbey,” *New Covenant*, May 1974; “Charismatic Congregations Set Union Meet,” *El Paso Herald-Post*, June 1, 1974

time, had hosted two Catholic Pentecostal weekends at the monastery. Held in 1968 and 1969, these offerings had proved immensely popular, perhaps enough to be the foundation of full-time ministry.⁵ Abbot Andrew Garber thus discovered the ideal resolution to his dilemma. Reassigning the Charismatics would bring peace to the community at home and, potentially, new life to a failing foundation.

Geraets arrived for a preliminary visit July-August 1969, presumably evaluating the monastery's potential as a Charismatic retreat center. By November of that year, he, Fr. Daniel Scully, and Bros. Michael Sawyer and Mark Schrum had moved to Pecos permanently. They began offering Pentecostal retreats with some regularity. These offerings were apparently quite successful, as evidenced by the ever-increasing popularity of Pecos. Nine more monks from Benet Lake had arrived by 1974, making the grand total thirteen. With such a population, in addition to a thriving ministry, Pecos no longer needed the oversight of Abbot Garber and St. Benedict's. Benet Lake raised Pecos from a priory to an independent abbey on March 26, 1974; the monks soon elected Fr. David Geraets to serve as their Abbot-for-Life.⁶

⁵ "Two Currents"; James T. Connelly, C.S.C., "Neo-Pentecostalism: The Charismatic Revival in the Mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches in the United States, 1960-1971," PhD diss. U of Chicago, 1977, Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (251737468); Paul DeBlassey, "Early Days of the Albuquerque Renewal," talk given at the Catholic Charismatic Center, Albuquerque, NM, 1 Jan 2015, http://asfccc.org/documents/2015/1/01_The_Early_Days_fo_the_Abq_Renewal.mp3; "Pecos Independent: An Abbey; Fr. Daniel Scully, O.S.B., "Beginning of Pentecostal Movement at Benet Lake," October 1967-May 1968, AJTC 29968, James T. Connelly Papers [hereafter referred to as JTC], University of Notre Dame Archives [hereafter referred to as UNDA]; David Geraets, OSB, "Leadership and Community," 1970, AJTC 29982, JTC, UNDA

⁶ "Two Currents"; "Pecos Independent: An Abbey."

Within the independent community of Pecos, the Charismatic Renewal had become a *raison d'être*, not a reason for discord. Theirs, they declared to their brothers who had stayed in Wisconsin, would be “a community in which creative approaches to praise of Him would be the focus of unity.” In other words, the Renewal would be essential to their life together.⁷ For this reason, Geraets and his brothers decreed that all members of Pecos must be open to the power of the Holy Spirit. One need not be fully Charismatic, they maintained, but the monastery could not tolerate open disbelief in the Charismatic gifts. Such a decree was the fruit of the monks’ time at Benet Lake. The Pecos Benedictines wanted to live in a community that would cherish and support their spirituality, Abbot Geraets explained. Allowing non-Charismatics to join the monastery might repeat the drama of Benet Lake, thus leading to another community split.⁸ Thus, the Pecos monks expressly committed themselves to living amongst their Charismatic brethren, seeing this as their *charism*, or special purpose within the broader world of Catholic ministry.

The Pentecostal Movement affected every aspect of monastery life, ranging from its outreach to its daily schedule. Most notably, it revolutionized the foundation’s retreat ministry. Pentecostal retreats became the monastery’s bread-and-butter, with Charismatic weekends targeting priests and religious, young adults, married couples, and even

⁷ “Two Currents”

⁸ Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., “Finding Your Charismatic Roots,” talk given at Southern California Renewal Communities Conference [hereafter referred to as SCRC], 1979; David Geraets, OSB, “Leadership and Community,” 1970, AJTC 29982, JTC, UNDA

children.⁹ The Pecos 44 was an especially popular offering, as were family retreat weekends in the summer. The former brought in groups of young adults for a 44-hour experiential encounter with the Lord, becoming so popular that the monastery could not accommodate all who wanted to attend.¹⁰ The latter involved perhaps the greatest number of people at a time. The monastery developed Charismatic programs for families to experience together, as well as separately by age group (children, teens, parents). One of the most important features outside of the prayer meetings, recalled former member Michael Getz, were the teen hikes along the nearby *Sangre de Cristo* mountain range. Not only did these activities give teenagers time to bond amongst each other, but more importantly they prevented romantic relationships. The youth were too tired to stand afterwards, laughed Getz, much less flirt.¹¹ While certainly offering other experiences, the monastery styled itself primarily as a Pentecostal retreat center, dedicated to spreading the Movement amongst Catholics.

The Charismatic Renewal also informed the community's approach to print ministry. Benet Lake had long dedicated itself to the education of the laity, predominantly through its *Why* pamphlets. Touching on every aspect of Catholic life, these booklets had looked to provide practical guidance for the spiritual life. Fr. Daniel Scully hoped Dove Publications could serve a similar function within the Charismatic Renewal. Laypeople

⁹ *The Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1973; "Something Happening in Catholic Church," *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1976; Charles A. Fracchia, *Living Together Alone: The New American Monasticism* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 120-137

¹⁰ *The Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1973

¹¹ Personal Interview with Michael Getz, 19 Nov 2015

lacked guidance on how to be both Catholic and Charismatic, he noted. Few Catholic books and even fewer Catholic clergy were equipped to offer advice on the Movement; few Pentecostal teachers and speakers had any understanding of the richness of the Catholic faith. Scully described it as something akin to a balancing act. In addition to supporting the Movement's spirituality, he explained, "we were trying to keep it Catholic, keep it sane and balanced and open."¹² Dove Publications was just one of the ways in which the monastery tried to achieve this goal. Scully's ministry had begun with a few pamphlets. Produced on the printing presses of Benet Lake, they were distributed to laypeople coming to the monks' prayer meetings. Dove Publications followed Scully to Pecos. There, it became an integral part of the monastery's Charismatic ministry, showing a commitment to spread the Movement not just by inviting retreatants in, but also by sending materials out.

This missionary attitude affected more than just print materials, however. Our Lady of Guadalupe committed itself to spreading the Renewal through foreign and domestic missions. Community members and finances supported several institutions in Mexico, known collectively as the "Hand of Help." These included an orphanage in Morelia and a youth group/vocational education program in Queretaro, along with summer service trips aimed at U.S. college students. Community members Frs. Albert Meyer, Gerard Stokes,

¹² Phone Interview with James Scully, 2 Dec 2015; *The Pecos Benedictine*, July 1973; "Why the Whys?" *Benet Lake News & Views*, June-July 1974; James Scully, OSB, "Pentecostal Benedictines," February 1971, Box 1, Folder 23, Judith Church Tydings Papers, UNDA; Fr. Daniel Scully left the priesthood in 1971, but remained part of the monastery and part of Dove Publications throughout the 1990s but under the name of James/Jim Scully.

and Alcuin Almasly helped administer these outreach efforts, directly affecting the lives of some 500 Mexicans.¹³ These mission activities had originally begun under the auspices of Benet Lake. St. Benedict's had taken over a priory in Morelia in 1959. The mission, led by Frs. Stokes and Meyer, had focused its efforts on three aspects of poverty: physical (nutrition program, free clinic); mental (education and scholarships); and spiritual (faith formation).¹⁴ Though expanding over the years, the emphasis remained the same: an equal balance of physical, mental, and spiritual charity.

Pecos promoted a different vision of foreign missions. Frs. Stokes and Meyer had joined the expanding priory sometime before 1974, bringing their missionary outreach with them. This organizational shift changed the emphasis of the Hand of Help. Material benefits and education would still be provided, the *Pecos Benedictine* newsletter explained, but within the context of “a basic Christian community, charismatically oriented, composed of men and women, married and single, religious and priests—a sort of Church in miniature dedicated to the needs of the poor in Mexico.” Personal Charismatic experience was to be prioritized, the Pecos monks believed, and the other aspects of mission were only important to the extent that they attracted others to this end. Our Lady of Guadalupe teamed up with local Charismatics for this effort, recruiting some from the *Rejobat* community of Mexico

¹³ *The Pecos Benedictine*, April-June 1974, Oct 1975

¹⁴ “Our Brothers in Morelia,” *Benet Lake News & Views*, Feb-March 1978; Odo John Zimmerann, O.S.B., *La Orden Benedicta en Mexico* (Tepeyac, Mexico: La Comision de la Historia de la UBM, 1983); “Helping a Town Get Ahead: Morelia Monks Labor to Reduce Poverty,” *Benet Lake News & Views*, Aug-Sept 1975; “This is What We Do,” *Benet Lake News & Views*, April-May 1974; *The Pecos Benedictine*, June 1974

City to help provide on-the-ground spiritual guidance.¹⁵ In this way, Pecos' missions strongly resembled its print and retreat ministry. All had clear origins in the practices of Benet Lake; however, all adopted a more expressly Charismatic emphasis in their new home.

Domestic ventures also privileged Charismatic spirituality. Geraets and his fellow monks traversed the Southwest, the United States, and even Europe, leading retreats and workshops on the Holy Spirit and Charismatic Renewal. This made for quite the hectic lifestyle. Within a single month, Abbot Geraets traveled to California, Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, New York City, and Rome. Other members maintained similarly packed schedules. They visited Arkansas, Texas, Missouri, and Washington with the same goal: spreading the Renewal.¹⁶ Members led retreats similar to the ones they administered back home, not content simply with waiting for the laity to come to them. This frequent travel had a purpose beyond evangelism, however. By explaining their faith to others, Geraets explained, the members of Pecos would remind themselves of why they fell in love with the Movement in the first place. Couples did the same thing when talking about how they first met, so why could those in religious life not do the same thing?¹⁷ In this way, these missions abroad strengthened the mission at home, with monks and laypeople returning from these retreats fully knowing the value of the work they were doing at Pecos.

¹⁵ *The Pecos Benedictine*, June 1974, Oct 1975

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, May 1988, Jan 1975, July 1974, Oct 1973; "Mission Set Oct. 15-18," *The Guardian*, Oct 6, 1978; Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

¹⁷ Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., "Christianity and Stress," talk given at SCRC Conference, 1998 and "Discernment of Paranormal Experiences," talk given at SCRC Conference, 1981.

Related desires informed Our Lady of Guadalupe's activities in New Mexico. Beyond simply holding meetings at the monastery, the Pecos monks ventured out into the local community, facilitating 10-15 weekly prayer meetings within a fifty-mile radius of their home. Such activities made the foundation the hub of the local and even state-wide Renewal.¹⁸ Lay leaders, even those part of older organizations, generally deferred to Pecos in terms of missions and evangelization. A Charismatic prayer group had coalesced around the parish of Our Lady of the Assumption in Southeast Albuquerque in 1968. At its height, the meetings were attracting some two hundred people, the largest number of any in the state. Despite this prominence, the group's leaders recognized the spiritual power of the monastery. "We knew that if [newcomers went] there one time, they would be hooked," explained layman Paul DeBlassey of the monks' appeal.¹⁹ Danny Llegos elaborated on the special power of the Pecos monastery. "The place itself does not give you miracles," he reported reverently, "but they take place here." To him and other laypeople, the monastery was "kind of like a holy ground," so important had it been in their own spiritual journeys and inner healing.²⁰ With such respect and experiences, local groups frequently partnered with the monastery for retreats or spiritual guidance, acknowledging its guiding role in the area.

¹⁸ *The Pecos Benedictine*, Aug 1973; "Pecos Pentecostal Abbey"; Jahr, "The First Pentecostal Monastery"

¹⁹ DeBlassey, "Early Days of the Albuquerque Renewal"; James Connelly, C.S.C., "The Charismatic Movement: 1967-1970," in *As the Spirit Leads Us*, edited by Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan (Paramus, NJ: Paulist Press, 1971)

²⁰ "Abbot David's Retirement – Pt 1"

This Charismatic ministry extended even to Pecos' direct neighbors, at least during the community's early years. The town of Pecos, one observer noted, was most distinguished by its poverty. One half lived without electricity, three-fourths of the population subsisted on welfare, and all saw the chickens and *burros* openly roaming the streets. Our Lady of Guadalupe launched its first anti-poverty initiatives in 1971. It sponsored a local credit union, as well as a community coffee house to provide monetary resources to laypeople.²¹ Michael Getz and another community member even moved into a house in East Pecos in 1973, hoping to foster greater contact with local residents. "Their idea," the community newsletter reported, "[was] merely to live the Gospel as fully as possible and to be at the service of the larger community around them."²² To this end, the monks formed the *Seguidores de Cristo*, a youth group for the underprivileged. The organization sponsored a variety of activities (prayer get-togethers, retreats, Bible classes, community picnics, service projects, etc.), all designed to reduce physical discomforts and increase local involvement in the Renewal. Such activity attracted the admiration of others within the Catholic Pentecostal Movement. They celebrated the monastery's involvement with the local community, perhaps worried about the widespread perception of Charismatics as self-involved. "Many people believe Pentecostals are turned inward," *New Covenant* reported approvingly in 1974, "but the monastery is reaching out to young

²¹ *Pecos Benedictine*, July 1973, April 1974; Jahr "The First Pentecostal Monastery"; Eddie Ensley, "Pentecostalism: Looking Back," *Catholic Charismatic*, vol 1, no. 1 (March/April 1976): 37-39

²² *Pecos Benedictine*, Nov 1974

families, everybody.”²³ These efforts lasted until 1975, at which point the monastery began devoting more of its attention to psychological, instead of physical, suffering.

A growth in membership paralleled this increase of ministries. Pecos expanded dramatically in population between 1968 and 1974. The monastic numbers had increased almost five-fold during this time, rising from three to fourteen monks. These numbers were expected to swell even further in the coming years, as Our Lady of Guadalupe welcomed four young men into its first novice class in 1974.²⁴ Monks were not the only people coming to Pecos, however. Laypeople began living at the monastery as part of a “covenant community” experiment in 1971. Though initially conceived of as a short-term immersion experience, the covenant community quickly became a permanent fixture of Pecos. Monks and laity alike appreciated the intimacy of living together, as well as the shared ministry within the broader Charismatic Renewal. The numbers at first were small (nine by 1974), but later expanded to over forty men *and women* by 1978.²⁵ When coupled with the twenty full-time monastics, these laypeople made Pecos one of the larger monasteries in the country with a total of sixty people overall.²⁶

These numbers made Our Lady of Guadalupe not just prominent, but prolific. Women had a place both in the covenant and monastic communities. The monastery

²³ Jahr, “The First Pentecostal Monastery”; Ensley, “Pentecostalism”; Josephine Massyngberde Ford, *Which Way for Catholic Pentecostals?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 69; Interview with Michael Getz

²⁴ “Two Currents”; “Pecos Independent”; “Abbot Andrew Miles OSB – 50 Years a Monk,” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated Jan 19, 2012, accessed April 20, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuRvF7WXQEI>; *Pecos Benedictine*, Feb 1974

²⁵ Fracchia, *Living Together Alone; Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1978

²⁶ Margaret Poloma, *The Charismatic Movement: Is There a New Pentecost?* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1982), 138

brought in its first women religious in 1970. Many Catholic nuns, just like the Catholic monks, had confronted questions about how they were to live out their religious vocation within the Charismatic Renewal. Seeing the formation of Pecos and recognizing the difficulty of such a task, they sought to join rather than emulate its success. Sister Jeanne Hill, O.P., was the first to petition for entrance. Though the monks at Pecos wanted to welcome her immediately, they deferred to Abbot Andrew Garber of Benet Lake. Lacking independence, they had to rely on his approval on such a bold experiment. Garber agreed to support a short-term “mixed community,” but only with the presence of another woman. Particularly in an area lacking in Catholic clergy, one woman living in the midst of a male monastery would promote gossip and anti-Church slander. On October 15, 1970, Hill and Sister Benedict Irish, O.S.B., became the first female residents of the monastery. They would not be the last. Other women joined over the years, both as part of the religious and the lay communities. With some limitations, they shared in the general life of the community, breaking the general pattern of sex-segregation within Catholic religious life. This unique approach to religious vocation, therefore, allowed for an even greater increase in the population of Pecos.²⁷

The Abbey of Our Lady of Guadalupe experienced other measures of success, as well. Pecos, one Benet Lake Benedictine noted, was perhaps the “busiest monastery and retreat house” in the country. Laypeople and religious regularly traveled in to the remote

²⁷ Letter from Fr. Daniel Stramara to Abbot General and Definitory, Nov 9, 1989, Box 2, Letters/Documents/Reports, Our Lady of Guadalupe Abbey Archive, Pecos, NM, 87552; Jahr, “The First Pentecostal Monastery”; Alan McAskill. “Monasticism in a Changing World,” Masters Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1995., 92; “Celebrating Monastic Life,” *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 27, 2001

location, arriving from New Mexico, Colorado, Nebraska, Texas, Kansas, Arizona, and California. These numbers were astounding, reaching, in the slower years, over three thousand visitors. Retreat by retreat, Pecos left its imprint on the broader Charismatic Renewal.²⁸ The Benedictines' print ministry also experienced tremendous growth. Though at first focusing solely on aspects of the Charismatic Renewal, Dove Publications soon branched into other areas of spiritual writing, such as Christian community, health and diet, and psychology. Beyond just being produced, these works were successful commercially. The *Pecos Benedictine* community newsletter circulated to around 60,000 people; Dove was producing approximately three new books, five new pamphlets, and ten new leaflets each year. By 1977, Scully and his group of monks had published over one million pamphlets, representing a major milestone and testament to their impact on the larger Charismatic community.²⁹ In this way, Dove became perhaps the second most well-known publishing in the Renewal, the first being Servant Publications controlled by the Word of God covenant community in Ann Arbor, MI.

Geraets and his brothers increased their footprint not only through publishing, but also through proliferation. Pecos spawned a number of like-minded Charismatic monasteries throughout the Southwest and West Coast. Three separate communities formed as a direct result of Pecos' growing population: Holy Trinity Monastery in St.

²⁸ "Two Currents"; "The Benedictine Monastery of Pecos, New Mexico," 1971, Box 62, Folder 2, Religious Orders Printed Material, UNDA; Sam Atwood, "Spiritual Pioneers: Men and Women Share Charismatic Monastic Life," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 15, 1986

²⁹ *Pecos Benedictine* Nov 1976, Sept 1977, June 1979; David Geraets, "Power in Pecos," *Catholic Charismatic*, vol 2, no. 3 (Aug/Sept 1977): 20-23; Jahr, "The First Pentecostal Abbey"; Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

David, AZ (1974), Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery in Waialua, HI (1983), and the Monastery of the Risen Christ in San Luis Obispo, CA (1991). Though in different locations, these new foundations adopted similar approaches to religious life, also structuring their communities Charismatically. The priories in Hawaii and California spoke to greater evangelistic ambition. Geraets, as well as several of the other original Benedictines from Benet Lake, dreamed of spreading the Renewal to Asia. Foundations on the West Coast were thought to be staging grounds for a spiritual expedition. The flourishing of these communities thus speaks to the flourishing of Pecos, as the original monastery donated personnel and start-up funds to get these ventures off the ground.³⁰

“LIVING TOGETHER ALONE”: *PERFECTAE CARITAS* AND THE RE-IMAGINATION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

All of these opportunities and achievements, those at Pecos maintained, flowed from the quality of their life together. They based this communal life, ironically enough, on a doctrine of individual experience. The monks advertised as much to their brothers back at Benet Lake. “Our belief is that our oneness with God and the vitality of our personal relationships with Him is the heart of our life together,” they proclaimed proudly.³¹ Pecos thus encouraged individual prayer in addition to communal worship. Community members were expected to devote at least an hour each day to personal reading

³⁰ “Abbot Andrew Miles, 50 Years a Monk”; Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*, 121; J Ripinger, “Benedictine Abbeys and Priors in the U.S.” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. 2nd ed. Vol. 2. Detroit: Gale, 2003. 254-256; McAskill, “Monasticism in a Changing World,” 75; “First Abbot Elected at Pecos Abbey,” *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 20, 1973

³¹ “Pecos Pentecostal Abbey”

and journaling, over and above the five periods of the Divine Office (Morning Prayer, Mass, Noon Prayer, Evening Prayer, Night Prayer).³² Individual formation grew all more important with the increasing popularity of Pecos' retreat ministry. Only from an intensely personal relationship with Jesus, the monks reasoned, could one sustain such a hectic pace of life and ministry.

Abbot Geraets and his Pentecostal brothers saw this spirit of prayer as a logical outcome of Vatican II. Before the Council, the Charismatic leader noted in one of his many talks, far too many religious had forgotten about the ultimate purpose of their life. Community organizations, educational apostolates, and political activism tended to overshadow the importance of spending time with God. "We can get so darn busy doing the things that we do that we forget the reason we're doing it all is to be filled with the Holy Spirit and joy," he lamented. This was the whole point of religious life, he concluded, taking the time to develop a "loving relationship with God." Any religious not growing in personal relationship was not living out his/her vocation appropriately.³³ The monks of Pecos thus saw their renewed emphasis on the interior life as part and parcel of recommendations advocated by Vatican II.

The Council, after all, had expressly endorsed such visions of religious life in the document *Perfectae Caritas* (Perfect Charity). Dealing entirely with the place of celibates within the Church, the proclamation tasked religious with a three-fold obligation:

³² Geraets, "Finding Your Charismatic Roots"; Abbot David Geraets, OSB, "I am the Way, the Truth, the Vine," talk given at SCRC, 1979

³³ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, "Let Us Forgive and Love Each Other," talk given at SCRC, 2000

rediscovering Christianity, charism, and community. Religious orders should orient themselves not towards worldly success or institutional expansion, the princes of the Church corrected, but only towards the “highest rule” of Christ. The Council openly called religious to return to contemplative prayer. A more mystical, imaginative, and personal form of prayer, contemplation would allow religious to return to the root of their faith. “It is necessary therefore that the members of every community, seeking God solely and before everything else, should join contemplation,” *Perfectae Caritas* declared, “by which they fix their minds and hearts on Him, with apostolic love, by which they strive to be associated with the work of redemption and to spread the kingdom of God.” Similar-sounding phrases filled the document, testifying to the importance of such a reorientation towards Christ. “The purpose of the religious life is to help the members follow Christ and be united to God,” the proclamation stated. “It should be constantly kept in mind, therefore, that even the best adjustments made in accordance with the needs of our age will be ineffectual unless they are animated by a renewal of spirit. This must take precedence over even the active ministry.”³⁴ Christ, in essence, needed to again be the center of religious life.

Perfectae Caritas invited religious to return to their apostolic roots, as well. The spirit of institution-building and worldly enterprise, the Church worried, had collapsed the differences between religious orders. Were there any meaningful differences between the

³⁴ Perfect Charity, *Perfectae Caritas*, Vatican II, Paul VI, 28 October 1965, 2, 15-18, accessed 20 August 2015, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_perfectae-caritatis_en.html, 2, 5

life of a Jesuit or a Benedictine, an Oblate of the Virgin Mary or the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate? And could these differences be spoken of in terms outside of their apostolates? Just as the post-Conciliar Church benefitted from the diversity of laity and religious, the Body of Christ would be glorified by the variety of religious life. To this end, Vatican II urged congregations to hew closely to the “original spirit of the institute,” otherwise known as a charism. Jesuits needed to live out their calling as Jesuits, and Benedictines as Benedictines in order to minister to different types of people and together build up all facets of the Church on earth. This vision could only be achieved by returning to the writings of a founder, *Perfectae Caritas* advised. St. Benedict of Nursia and St. Ignatius of Loyola were not just the past, but the future.³⁵ The Council hoped each order could find its way back to Christianity through contemplation and through differentiation.

Finally, the Council directed religious to devote more attention to genuine community. “Love,” it declared, “sums up the whole law...and by it we know that we have crossed over from death to life....the unity of the brethren is a visible pledge that Christ will return...and a source of great apostolic energy.”³⁶ Such a statement hints at the lack of religious warmth in the pre-Conciliar era. In the United States at least, colleges, seminaries, and houses had been based more on “life in common” than “life together,” more on quantity than quality. Sure, members lived together, prayer together, studied together, and worked together, but did they care for each other? And could they show it if

³⁵ Ibid., 2

³⁶ Ibid., 15

they did? By and large, the Church discouraged affective relationships between members of the same community, known as “particular” friendships. This arose partially out of a fear of exclusivity and mostly out of a fear of homosexuality.³⁷ After the Council, this emphasis changed. The Vatican urged religious communities to adopt more intimate living quarters, working to let members come together under the principle of “humanization.” At its most extreme, explained Catholic layman Charles Fracchia, “this means a small group, whose members know each other” and were bound more by affective relationships than by religious structures.³⁸ Such was the new vision of religious life promoted by *Perfectae Caritas*, one that endorsed diversity and intimacy, both with other religious and with the divine.

In order to achieve these goals, the Council encouraged religious communities to adjust their practices and regulations as needed. Just because something was traditional, *Perfectae Caritas* explained, did not mean that it was appropriate. “The religious habit,” for example, needed to “meet the requirements of health and be suited to the circumstances of time and place and to the needs of the ministry involved.” Heavy woolen religious garb, therefore, should be changed out for something lighter if a community was doing mission work in the jungle. The Council urged such alterations in all aspects of religious life, even religious cloister. A measured separation from the world, cloister was meant to keep

³⁷ Agnes Cunningham, “Appropriate Renewal and Ecclesial Identity,” in *The Future of the Religious Life*, Peter Huizing and William Basset, eds. (New York: Seabury, 1974); “The Jesuits’ Search For a New Identity.” *Time* 101, no. 17 (April 23, 1973)

³⁸ Charles Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*, quoted in Karl Suso Frank, O.F.M., trans Joseph Lienhard, S.J., *With Greater Liberty: A Short History of Christian Monasticism and Religious Orders* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1993), 219-222

members in the community focused on God alone. Some religious, for example, committed themselves to absolute silence. These practices, however, made absolutely no sense for someone engaged in ministry work outside of the community, such as a counselor, nurse, or teacher. The Vatican, while not asking congregations to abandon cloister altogether, mandated that it be free of “obsolete” restrictions that prevented the fulfillment of “apostolic duties.”³⁹ Recommendations for religious life thus revolved around flexibility and spirituality, as the Church tried to address shortcomings that had been developing for centuries.

The monks of Pecos justified their Charismatic practices in light of these recommendations. Charismatic worship and contemplative prayer were two sides of the same coin, argued community member Sis. Jeanne Hill. The essence of each hinged on one’s surrender to God, as well as personal experience of the divine. True contemplative experience, she continued, was often the continuation of Charismatic experience, simply brought down to a deeper level of spirituality. “I believe that God will be able to prepare a people who truly resemble his Son, whose ways are not our ways, whose thoughts are infinitely above ours,” she explained to her fellow Charismatics, challenging them to develop a fuller faith. “But we will have to submit to being re-formed by him from within, to being broken open at a level which requires far more courage and honesty than our original entrance into the charismatic journey.”⁴⁰ Geraets evaluated the relationship

³⁹ Perfect Charity, 16-17

⁴⁰ Jeanne Hill, “Con-templing with God: Healing the Fear,” in *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, edited by Paul Hinnebusch, (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 67-75

between the two types of prayer similarly. “[The Renewal] is nothing less than a renewal in mysticism—the direct experience of God’s personal presence in the life of His people,” he declared.⁴¹ The true importance of the Charismatic Renewal, in fact, lay in its promotion of contemplation. “You must see the connection between tongues and the prayer method,” he admonished lay Charismatics in 1972. “If you see speaking in tongues as an isolated phenomenon, it is nonsense.”⁴² He, too, emphasized the value of Charismatic worship in attracting believers to the more mature path of contemplation. “Spiritual knowledge....gives us a motivation to go forward and continue living,” he believed. “[It] transform[s] the present by bringing in something of the future.”⁴³ Such spiritual sweetness, both Hill and Geraets argued, helped invite the soul into its dark night⁴⁴, making fuller spiritual knowledge possible.

These practices, at least in the view of those at Pecos, had deep roots in Christian tradition. The early believers of Acts had spoken in tongues and witnessed miracles daily, they pointed out, implying that an appreciation of the Spirit underlay the Christian life. “Pentecost is the most ancient and the most new,” the Abbot explained to a Pentecostal visitor in 1973 of the monastery’s practices. “I don’t think you can be a good Christian

⁴¹ *Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1977

⁴² “Charismatic Conference: 3000 Take Part in Catholic Conclave,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 17, 1972

⁴³ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “God: Visions, Dreams, and Revelations,” talk given at SCRC, 2001

⁴⁴ The dark night of the soul, from St. John of the Cross. To further grow in holiness, St. John held, the believer would have to pass through an intense period of personal discouragement, a time in which he/she felt totally abandoned by God (think Job of the Old Testament). All favors and spiritual sweetness were, in this view, meant simply to attract the soul into deeper, more painful, and more mature relationship.

without the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁵ Charismatic stirrings were visible in Benedictine tradition, as well. With the coming of the Renewal, Geraets and his brothers had begun reevaluating the biography of their founder, St. Benedict of Nursia. Written by Pope Gregory I, the tome spoke openly of healings, prophecies, miracles, spiritual warfare, etc. Former critics had dismissed these happenings as part of “a bedtime story for...children,” seeing them as nothing more than literary devices common to the time period. Those at Pecos approached the biography differently. Benedict must have been Charismatic himself, they reasoned, making their own Pentecostal practices not an aberration in the history of monasticism, but rather a return to its authentic roots.⁴⁶ Thus, Pecos saw its unique character as part of the mandate of Vatican II. Because Benedict was Charismatic, they were returning to spirit of their founder by showing renewed attention to the Spirit of God.

Geraets and his Pentecostal band saw their worship style as an integral part of communal renewal, as well. Showing attention to the power of the Spirit, they believed, helped religious live together more joyfully. Much of religious community revolved around the work of personal formation, Geraets explained in 1971. Brother monks took responsibility for the spiritual development of each other, pointing out each other’s failings through a process known as fraternal correction. In the ideal, this process looked to foster true brotherhood within the monastery, creating a community in which members prepared

⁴⁵ Doug Wead, “What Do They Do in a Pentecostal Monastery,” in *Catholic Charismatics: Are They for Real?* by Doug Wead (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1973): 60-68

⁴⁶ “The Pecos Experiment,” undated, Box 62, Folder 2, Religious Orders Printed Material, UNDA

each other for their heavenly home. In reality, however, such correction could make monastic life a living hell, full of criticism and resentment. The Charismatic Renewal mitigated this danger, Geraets believed. Praying in tongues and for each other, he noted, “that’s when [people] reveal themselves accidentally at their best.”⁴⁷ These practices helped monks remember that tongues and miracles were just like fraternal correction; both came from God and not from man. Pentecostal practices also fostered intimacy within the community. With an appreciation of healing ministry, the brothers and sisters of Pecos could serve as conduits of God’s love, not just communal critics. Such innovations helped minimize the tensions of religious life and form the loving style of community endorsed by Vatican II.

Just like *Perfectae Caritas*, the monks of Pecos emphasized the value of a flexible approach to community life. Clothing offered perhaps the most visible sign of this philosophy. Rather unlike traditional monastics, the Benedictines of Our Lady of Guadalupe maintained a casual dress code. They sported t-shirts and jeans most of the time, looking like a bunch of “students and professors.” The Benedictine crosses hung around their necks were the only thing that truly distinguished them from everyday laypeople. The community donned their traditional habits in Mass, but rarely otherwise.⁴⁸ The schedule of the monastery, as well, spoke to the practical bent of Pecos. Liturgy of the Hours normally structured monastic life, with monks expected to break their work for

⁴⁷ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Meeting the Challenge of Leadership,” talk given to SCRC, 1979

⁴⁸ Atwood, “Spiritual Pioneers”; Wead, “What Do They Do in a Pentecostal Monastery,”

prayer five times a day. The very motto of the Benedictine order, “*ora et labora*” (pray and work), testified to the primacy of this prayer in monasteries. Such a rigid schedule, however, could not coexist with the demands of Pentecostal retreat ministry. Geraets and his community still maintained a large part of the hours, but they frequently moved them around to accommodate visiting laypeople.⁴⁹ Pecos adjusted the principles of monastic enclosure, as well. Traditionally, monks reserved large parts of the monastery for themselves, forbidding visitors from entering. Pecos adopted the opposite approach, actively inviting newcomers to share in the majority of their meals and community events. “A traditional monastic setup is on a pedestal,” Geraets explained of the practice. “It’s a withdrawal, almost fleeing from the world.”⁵⁰ Pecos thus structured its life to be more in line with the world, even at the cost of abandoning traditional practices.

Internal regulations also reflected this adaptability. Community prayer times or meals, for example, were more suggestions than ironclad obligations. Understanding that retreat ministry might take people away or wear them out, Geraets trusted community members to manage their own time appropriately. There was no need for harsh punishments or arbitrary rules, simply individual maturity. This understanding flowed from previous experience as well as from Charismatic theology. At Benet Lake, one monastic explained, more than a few monks had become the victim of “Pharisee

⁴⁹ McAskill, “Monasticism in a Changing World,” 76 ; Jahr, “The First Pentecostal Monastery”; Ed Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism,” *The Telegraph*, Dec 7, 1987

⁵⁰ Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”; Interview with Abbot Aiden Gore, 18 Nov 2015

Syndrome,” an over-attentiveness to tradition and obligation that “stifle[d] free expression of the Spirit.”⁵¹ Such attention to the rules was misplaced, the Pecos monks believed, and only distracted from genuine relationship with God and each other. At its worse, it would lead religious further away from God. Rules and regulations often fostered resentment and recrimination, as certain members of the community would feel overburdened (from looking out for the others) or under attack (from the supervision of others). Wanting to avoid the dangers of this illness, therefore, the monks of Pecos built breathing room into their new monastic life.

This openness had theological, in addition to historic, significance. Monastic life needed to have “as few rules as possible” in order to allow its participants to “be attentive to the movements of the Holy Spirit.”⁵² Thus, just as with Charismatic prayer meetings, the Pecos monks hesitated to follow too much of a structure, for fear that their planned events would get in the way of the unplanned wonders of the Spirit. Jim Scully saw such flexibility as a long-overdue corrective to Catholic religious life. “Neither the charismatic nor the institutional dimension is meant by God to exist by itself,” he explained in 1974. “There has to be a balance between the two...it must be like the balance of a tailback zig-zagging through a swarm of tacklers—a dynamic balance that advances the Kingdom of God.”⁵³ Coming from the overregulation at Benet Lake, those at Pecos often erred towards a less structured spirituality, something they believed to be more genuine.

⁵¹ “The Pecos Experiment”

⁵² “The Benedictine Monastery of Pecos, New Mexico”

⁵³ *Pecos Benedictine*, Feb 1974

The Pecos prayer life encapsulated this idea of balance. Community members used their new freedom to celebrate prayer Charismatically, “reintroduc[ing] the more charismatic manifestations of the Holy Spirit back into the formal liturgy, just as it was in the early Church.”⁵⁴ Prophecy might enliven Morning Prayer; a laying on of hands for healing might follow Vespers. These gifts even punctuated the normally solemn Mass. “The whole ceremony was suddenly suspended in mid-air” with the distribution of the Eucharist, one Pentecostal observer recalled.

One of the administering priests was leaning against the wall, staring dreamily towards the ceiling. The prior stood facing straight ahead, his eyes shut tight. Suddenly he began to sing softly in another language. It wasn’t Latin. He was singing in tongues. The whole room was filled with voices, each singing a melody in another language. Ingeniously the various tunes harmonized with a sound that was in itself a miracle.⁵⁵

Such Charismatic practices, the monks believed, enlivened the traditional liturgy. Geraets even went so far as to label them essential for the Church’s future. “I will not be content with liturgical renewal until the charismatic gifts are once more incorporated into the church’s public worship,” he declared in 1977.⁵⁶ Free to do as they wished in their new space, the refugees from Benet Lake focused on bringing the Charismatic gifts into their religious lifestyle. While introducing new practices, however, the Charismatic Benedictines still emphasized the value of keeping the old. Tongues and other manifestations of the Spirit, Geraets elaborated, were “like frosting on a cake...beautiful.”

⁵⁴ “The Pecos Experiment”

⁵⁵ Wead, “What Do They Do in a Pentecostal Monastery?”

⁵⁶ *Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1977

Yet, frosting, no matter how delicious, could not exist without its “meat and potatoes,” he cautioned.⁵⁷ Charismatic elements needed a structure no less than the structure needed the Charismatic. “Not everyone can be spontaneous at 6 o’clock in the morning,” he quipped.⁵⁸ “You have to have the skeleton in the body, and you need flesh and bones or you don’t have a body,” Geraets summarized.⁵⁹ Both aspects, the Charismatic and the institutional, were necessary for the fullness of Charismatic worship.

The Pecos monks used similar appeals to past, practicality, and pneumatology to justify the presence of women at the monastery. As noted previously, women became a valued part of life at Pecos, both in the monastic and lay communities. There, they lived a life largely in common with religious men, sharing in meals, daily prayers, and work. The same applied to laywomen in the covenant community, though with a few additional restrictions. The monastery forbade male and female laypersons from venturing into each other’s rooms or even riding in the same car alone. Geraets and the permanent community only allowed one-on-one isolation if one participant had permanent vows. An unspoken dress code emerged amongst men and women, as well. The sexes avoided shorts and short-sleeved shirts, hoping these precautions would safeguard the community from unnecessary scandal.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Geraets, “Leadership and Community”

⁵⁸ Ibid.; “Wild Presence on the Cliff above the Pecos Benedictine Monastery,” circa 1971, True House (Charismatic community) Records, UNDA

⁵⁹ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Return to Unity,” talk given at SCRC, 1979

⁶⁰ Atwood, “Spiritual Pioneers”

At times, these precautions seemed not to be enough. “To be honest, sexuality is a real issue,” explained member Mary Roemer. At least twenty couples formed out of the covenant community, testifying to the attraction that must have affected life in the monastery.⁶¹ In the early 1970s, agreed Sherry Burns, Pecos seemed like the “dating capital of the world.” So many young people flowed through the community’s life together, creating an atmosphere of constant movement and constant opportunity.⁶² Such an environment seems to have even affected those committed to religious life. Former monastic Michael Getz recalled one incident in particular. He remembered a woman coming up to him and announcing, matter-of-factly, that she “[didn’t] have a bra on.” For the most part, he quickly added, “[people] knew what they were there for...a ministry to people.”⁶³ Such an incident, however, does testify to a certain sexual tension at Pecos, one that no doubt made living in mixed community difficult, even impossible for some.

Despite the risk, however, Geraets and his monks and nuns decided to continue the experiment. They cited historical and spiritual reasons in their justifications. Though a strange development, the Pecos monks acknowledged, “double monasteries” were not unheard of in the history of monasticism. St. Benedict and St. Scholastica had built their monasteries side-by-side, seeing the value of continued interactions between men and women.⁶⁴ This reasoning openly appealed to the call of *Perfectae Caritas*, identifying

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Interview with Sherry Burns 9 Dec 2015

⁶³ Interview with Michael Getz

⁶⁴ Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”

similar styles of life even at the founding of their order. The Charismatic Renewal and renewed attention to the Holy Spirit, as well, militated against the separation of the sexes. The Pecos monks, as well as other Charismatic groups, worried about the formation of unnecessary structures. God had sent his Spirit to unify people, they reasoned, not to keep them apart. Such logic, in addition to the pure excitement and joy that many felt from the Spirit, led many of the early Charismatics to bring women and men closer together.⁶⁵

The Benedictine monks also rationalized this arrangement practically. How could young men and women truly commit themselves to religious celibacy, Geraets reasoned, without knowing what they were truly giving up? Having both genders at the monastery helped people determine the appropriateness of their vocation. “I want to find out about [sexual desire and celibacy] when they’re younger rather than later on in life,” he explained in 1987. “It’s a maturing thing.”⁶⁶ Indeed, the temptations of being surrounded by such godly men and women seemed to be part of Pecos formation. Geraets welcomed people leaving to pursue relationships. He would rather have them find out before religious vows than deal with the scandal that had affected so many in the pre-Vatican II priesthood: the scandal of leaving once already committed to celibacy.⁶⁷ In this way, the presence of both sexes guarded against dangers of the recent past, the kind that had decimated the clergy in the wake of the Second Council.

⁶⁵ See, for example, Stephen Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980), ix

⁶⁶ Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”

⁶⁷ Ibid; Interview with Michael Getz; Interview with Marie Discullio-Naples, 8 Dec 2015

Besides avoiding obvious dangers, many monks felt that it brought positive qualities to monastic life. It was “a more natural way to live,” detailed Fr. Stephen Odenbrett.⁶⁸ “We’ve all found that the importance of interaction between men and women in this community...is of inestimable value.” Odenbrett identified the complementariness of men and women as the primary benefit brought to Pecos. “Being alive in the Spirit and being alive in our prayer obviates the sexual aspect of men and women living together in a monastery,” he explained. “We are celibate and relate to each other as brother and sister, as part of being together.”⁶⁹ In this way, the presence of both sexes benefitted not only those who left, but also those who stayed.

This sense of practicality affected even monastic recruitment. Those living the monastic life, in contrast to other religious, swore to four vows: poverty, chastity, obedience, and *stability*. Pecos upended this last tenet, instead embracing the idea of a temporary vocation to religious life. The monastic state of life was not for everyone, the Abbot argued, a fact driven home by the vocations crisis following Vatican II. The Pecos Benedictines believed that they needed to change such a process if they hoped to survive in the post-Conciliar world. For this reason, Our Lady of Guadalupe envisioned itself less as a permanent home and more as a spiritual pit stop. Whether attracting laypeople for the weekend or several years, the process would “enable them to drink in something of what God is doing in our community and...have something to take home with them.”⁷⁰ Geraets

⁶⁸ Atwood, “Spiritual Pioneers”

⁶⁹ Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

⁷⁰ “Wild Presence on the Cliff above the Pecos Benedictine Monastery”

figured that this approach helped everyone involved. “It’s beneficial for their growth and beneficial for us,” he noted of those who stayed and left. “I consider that part of their journey,” a way for them to be more prepared for whatever they would go onto next.⁷¹ For this reason, the monastery adopted a simplified approach to discerning (or deciding upon) religious life. New members could join the covenant community after as little as a month of prayerful observation, often for as long as they wished to stay. While the monastery welcomed longer-term vocations, it did not force them, instead respecting where each individual was in the process of discernment.⁷² This approach was necessary, Pecos believed, to make the monastic life more accessible and palatable to modern men and women.

This idea of a temporary vocation proved a double-edged sword for the community. On the one hand, it increased vocations astronomically. At a time when most orders were despairing of bringing in young men and women, Pecos was having to turn them away. These newcomers also brought with them a special level of energy and vitality, something invaluable for a foundation committed to the hectic schedule of retreat ministry. Finally, it brought many of the laity into a lifelong relationship with the monks and the monastery. Even for those who decided to leave, many maintained close ties to the monastic community, returning frequently for retreats and reunions.⁷³ Yet, at the very same time,

⁷¹ Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”

⁷² Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

⁷³ “Abbot David’s Retirement – Pt 1”; Pecos Benedictine Abbey, *Help Us to Dream: A Pictorial Album Celebrating Reunion 2001 with the Monks and Sisters of Our Lady of Guadalupe Olivetan Benedictine Congregation* (Sulphur, LA: Wise, 2001)

these temporary vocations undermined the stability meant to be at the heart of monastic life. For all those who came, a majority left; only ten to fifteen percent made it to final vows. Later members found such a revolving door dizzying, eventually ending the practice in the early 1990s.⁷⁴ Regardless of its long-term potential, however, these temporary vocations illustrated the practical approach Pecos took to just about all areas of its monastic life.

The monastery also committed itself to ecumenism, believing that contact with other Christians could benefit their own spirituality. Convinced that the Holy Spirit cared nothing for denominational boundaries, Pecos sought to “welcome all who loved Jesus and even those who do not, that they may know him.”⁷⁵ This applied not only to retreats, but even to the composition of the covenant community. Protestants occasionally joined the lay community at the monastery, and at least one Jewish woman in the early 1990s. “It makes absolutely no difference either to me or anyone else that I’m a Jewish person,” Victoria Rabinowe explained of her ten years with the monastery in 2001. “Our spiritual bond and our love for each other transcend religion totally. I think that is the spirit of the monastery.”⁷⁶ Encouraging his fellow Catholics to bolster their contact with Charismatics of all stripes, Geraets even cautioned them to downplay their devotion to Mary and the saints. Veneration of the saints should always have its end in Jesus, he warned, if for no

⁷⁴ Atwood, “Spiritual Pioneers”

⁷⁵ Ford, *Which Way for Catholic Pentecostals?*, 71

⁷⁶ “Celebrating Monastic Life”; Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

other reason than to prevent friction with Protestant brothers and sisters.⁷⁷ Thus, the same sense of practicality reigned in these ecumenical relations, as Pecos wanted to do nothing to jeopardize the rewarding relationships it had developed with Protestant Pentecostals.

Such a push towards unity bordered, albeit occasionally, on heresy. Pecos, for example, sometimes allowed non-Catholics to partake of the Holy Eucharist. Traditionally, the Church has reserved the Eucharist for baptized and confirmed Catholics in good standing; it maintains that recipients of the Host must understand and acknowledge the Divine Presence of Jesus in the wafer and wine. This was (and is) a serious issue within Catholicism, as divorced Catholics are not allowed to receive the Host without first getting an Annulment (or ecclesial invalidation of their marriage). Pecos, however, appears to have practiced this “intercommunion” at least occasionally, as evidenced by the testimony of Pentecostal visitor Doug Wead. “It may have tasted like any other piece of bread,” he recalled of his experience with the Eucharist, “but there was an awesome presence of the Holy Spirit with us.”⁷⁸ This willingness to bend Catholic doctrine spoke to the emphasis on flexibility at the monastery.

Simplicity and practicality, as well as a desire to witness to such qualities, were even visible in the structures of the monastery. As the monastery upgraded its facilities throughout the 1970s, it emphasized innovation and frugality. The construction of a building for Dove Publications in 1977 most clearly reflected this ethos. “A simple,

⁷⁷ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Discernment of Paranormal Experiences,” talk given at SCRC, 1981

⁷⁸ Wead, “What Do They Do in a Pentecostal Monastery?”

straightforward combination of form and function,” an architectural magazine reported, “the building conveys a crude aesthetic that demands involvement, emotionally and physically,” a tone “consistent with its climate and the values of its Benedictine owners.” The project revolved around the innovative idea of drum-wall heating. Black drums, filled with water and heated by the sun, produced 95% of the building’s heat.⁷⁹ Solar energy played an important role in this and further building projects. The monks used the sun to help heat guest rooms, the monastic enclosure, and even the compound’s water supply.⁸⁰ Though monastery also justified such projects in terms of saving money, it saw this construction as part of its ministry. “Because of the energy crisis, we felt that we should attempt a bit of pioneering,” the *Pecos Benedictine* reported of the Dove building. “If we can demonstrate how the abundant New Mexico sunlight can heat our building, perhaps others will be inspired to use a similar method in their homes and businesses.”⁸¹ Such a push towards conservation was rooted in faith. Building projects and recycling offered a chance to communicate a particular vision of Christianity to those outside the monastery. “I really feel that this is a help to the local people in the Pecos area, showing them how to build effectively. It’s an educational thing—part of the Christian message,” Sister Elish Ryan concluded. “Ours is a simple lifestyle, and solar energy goes along with it.”⁸² In this

⁷⁹ “Benedictine Monastery Workshop,” *Design Quarterly*, no. 103 (1977): 26

⁸⁰ *Pecos Benedictine*, Feb, June 1977, Feb 1979, Dec 1980

⁸¹ *Pecos Benedictine*, Aug 1974

⁸² *Ibid.*, Dec 1976; Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

way, those at Pecos envisioned themselves living a practical, yet exemplary life, meant to educate those around them.

Indeed, such an attitude permeated monastery life. No one was trying to be liberal or conservative at Our Lady of Guadalupe, Geraets explained in 1971, just open to the Holy Spirit. “We’re not trying to destroy anything and we’re not trying to be Iconoclasts....all we’re trying to do is to be open to the Holy Spirit and to find the things that help us to be more open to the Holy Spirit,” he detailed. “If it’s traditional, we’ll use it. If it’s untraditional, we’ll use it too.”⁸³ So distant from the ideals of monastic life before Vatican II, Pecos echoed the ideas and even language of *Perfectae Caritas*. Both were willing to adjust traditional structures in order to facilitate contemplation, community, and *charism*.

Those at Pecos credited these adjustments with their spirit of community and success in ministry. “I have never lived a more authentic Benedictine life than I have here: it springs from the spirit, not the law,” Fr. Michael Sawyer reported in 1979, arguing that such “community represents the fullness of the Benedictine monastic tradition.”⁸⁴ Other members of the monastery agreed wholeheartedly. “It just felt like a family,” Sister Geralyn Spaulding remembered dreamily in 1991.⁸⁵ Fr. Scully used similar, albeit more specific language to describe his experience. He noted particularly the sense of “informality and openness, sometimes to the point of jovial chaos” that pervaded their life

⁸³ “Wild Presence on the Cliff above the Pecos Benedictine Monastery”

⁸⁴ Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

⁸⁵ “Pecos Benedictines – ‘Men and Women’s Community,’” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated Jan 19, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8-KK3Vbpro&list=PL443B4AB73CA592FC&index=10>

together. It was a “close-knit family,” he recalled, “which has great fun at meals and seems somehow to get a lot done without any rules.”⁸⁶ This openness, all agreed, made life more natural and joyful. Guarding against the “Pharisee syndrome,” those at Pecos lived together as a family, greatly increasing the fulfillment that its members found in religious life.

The Charismatic and gendered dimensions of the monastery further contributed to this atmosphere. The Charismatic Renewal, with its emphasis on healing and divinity in each of us, explained Geraets, allowed people to more fully share themselves with other members of the community. The sharing helped people feel at home, and feel loved.⁸⁷ The presence of women and men together in the monastic enclosure appeared to have a similar function. “It’s not only that we pray together each day, but we become very close to each other—like brother and sister—sharing each other’s thoughts and feelings, ministering to each other,” recounted community member Jim Steele in 1979. “We are celibate,” he concluded, “but we love one another.”⁸⁸ Something about love from the opposite sex, though completely chaste, seemed to increase the warmth of community life. And only through such community life, members of Our Lady of Guadalupe would no doubt argue, could they give so much to their print and retreat ministry. The success of their internal endeavors thus depended on and flourished because of their internal dynamic.

⁸⁶ James Scully, OSB, “Pentecostal Benedictines,” February 1971, Box 1, Folder 23, Judith Church Tydings Papers, UNDA

⁸⁷ Geraets, “Leadership and Community”

⁸⁸ Atwood, “Spiritual Pioneers”

Outside reports validated these seemingly amazing claims. “The atmosphere of this monastery...breathes freedom and joy,” wondered observer Josephine Ford.⁸⁹ Professor Charles Fracchia likewise expressed his admiration upon visiting the monastery tucked away in the *Sangre de Cristo* mountains. “There is a sense of joy,” he reported, “a sense of reaching out to one another, a sense, as one member of the community said to me, that ‘Jesus Christ is lord of past, present, and future.’”⁹⁰ Those who stayed in the community for longer durations had even higher praises to sing of Pecos. “I have never lived, except for this month, genuine intensive community life with brothers and sisters,” Fr. Francis de Ruijte wrote admiringly in 1978 of his visit to Pecos. “I have ‘been in community’ for most of my life. Here I truly met brothers and sisters in the Lord, not a religious ‘hotel.’ The entire community and its activities breathe an atmosphere of charismatic renewal, intensive yet at the same time moderate and disciplined.”⁹¹ Such support and caring seemed to form the essence of life at Pecos, correcting the past flaws of over-ritualized religious life through the recommendations of Vatican II.

Yet, Pecos was not the only community looking to update its life after the Second Council. At a Charismatic Day of Renewal in 1971 hosted by the Benet Lake Benedictines, Fr. Benedikt Songy, O.S.B., urged all religious to follow the community’s example. The Charismatic Renewal depended upon this return to the *charism*, he argued. “Benedictines have to go back to Benedict of Nursia, nobody else.” Songy justified this statement by

⁸⁹ Ford, *Which Way for Catholic Pentecostals?*, 70

⁹⁰ Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

⁹¹ *Pecos Benedictine*, June 1978

appealing to the parable of the dishonest steward in Luke 16: 1-13. Those faithful in small matters can be trusted in larger matters, he explained, for grace builds upon grace. If religious were not true to their own heritage in the Church, how could they be truly attentive to the promptings of the Spirit? “The life is in the root,” he summarized, “and the root shows us a way of being a Christian in the world today.” Songy believed such return to the founders was, just like those at Pecos, only possible through the “updating of structures.”⁹² This talk illustrates two aspects of the broader Renewal. First, it speaks a little bit to the prominence of Pecos’ community, particularly among Charismatic religious. Second, it testifies to the widespread debate occurring in the years after Vatican II, with religious communities wondering how they, on the local level, were going to respond to the changes advised by the Council.

Pecos thus appeared to embody the spirit of Vatican II, or, at the very least, the spirit of *Perfectae Caritas*. The monks adjusted their life however they saw fit in order to foster individual prayer, return to the spirit (as they saw it) of their founder, and build true community. These changes seemed to be the source of the monastery’s apostolic energy and success, as demonstrated by expanding ministry, population, and influence within the Charismatic Renewal. In this way, the Pecos monastery represents a grassroots response by religious to the challenge of Vatican II. For as revolutionary as this all seemed, however, Pecos was not the only group looking to change the essence of its life in the late

⁹² Fr. Benedikt Songy, OSB, Sis. Theresa Toll, D.C., and Bro. Robert Pawall, O.F.M., “Religious Communities and Charismatic Renewal,” 1971, AAVL 39110-39111, JTC, UNDA

1960s and early 1970s. Lay people, too, had a story, one revolving around the creation of their own covenant communities.

CHAPTER 4: “IT WAS ALSO POSSIBLE TO LIVE AT THE SOUTH POLE”: *THE RISE OF CHARISMATIC COVENANT COMMUNITIES*

Startling allegations from South Bend shocked the Charismatic world, threatening to make the Movement more remembered for its scandal than its sanctity, more for its hold over people than its claim to holiness. Breaking in 1975, this controversy revolved around the conduct and community of the now-defunct “True House,” a group Charismatic households at Notre Dame under the leadership of Jim Byrne. True House had held undue authority over its members, Notre Dame professor Dr. William Storey claimed in a letter sent to the local bishop and Catholic authorities across the nation, pressuring them to follow spiritual advice contrary to Church doctrine. Storey pointed to a process known as “breakthrough ministry” as the most worrisome of these practices.

Though only implemented a dozen times between 1972 and 1973, breakthrough ministry was shocking enough to raise questions about the nature of the entire Charismatic Movement. Ex-members of True House offered vivid descriptions of the practice. True House functioned through a system of headship and submission, they explained. This meant that each individual placed him/herself under the director of another, more mature member of the community. The initiative had begun with good intentions. Meant to be a system of spiritual mentorship, headship and submission helped members of True House approach their faith life more seriously and with more accountability. When it failed, however, it failed spectacularly. Personal opinion could be misinterpreted as the will of God. “I was told my spirit needed to be calmed down,” explained Laura Tolosko

incredulously, simply because she liked to “go running around the house singing.”¹ John Hittinger remembered similarly arbitrary grievances. The True House leadership discouraged him from pursuing a major in theology, seeing it as a danger to his Charismatic faith. “Why do you want to spend your energies on second-hand material,” they queried, “when you can experience it first-hand?”² In this way, heads exercised far-reaching power over their charges, offering direction on everything from temperament to academic studies.

Breakthrough ministry was the consequence of repeated disobedience. When an individual refused to follow his/her head’s advice, their personal issue became a public problem. Community leaders would meet and brainstorm possible solutions, with the individual’s head “gather[ing] useful data on the individual’s history, his family’s history and certain weaknesses in the person’s psychological makeup.” Nothing, they believed, should stand in the way of personal holiness; nothing, therefore, was off limits. Community leaders intentionally made breakthrough ministry dramatic and borderline traumatic, all with the goal of helping.

The moment of confrontation arrived suddenly. “Without forewarning, and in the middle of the night,” Hittinger related,

...the individual was roused out of bed and taken to the coordinator’s (leader’s) house. In a darkened room, the individual would be subjected to an intense questioning until he admitted failure. After this admission, he would be required to make a general confession of his sins (from childhood onward) to the coordinator. He was then prayed over for what was termed a ‘healing of memories.’

¹ “True House: ‘Exorcism, Humility’ Complaints Revealed,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 29 Aug 1975

² Ibid; “Charismatics II,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 29 Aug 1975

Tolosko recalled the theatricality of it all, noting the special care community coordinators took to make her “conscious” of her sin.

They drew crazy diagrams on the board about my journey from the world of darkness to the world of light. It was a very calculated procedure, as though they knew how to construct a soul. They had me talk about my family and my past. What they wanted to do was to make me understand that they were going to call me on my ‘patterns of darkness inflicted by my past.’

Leaders had great confidence in what they were doing. No measure, no matter how extreme, could be seen as too much when faced with the alternative of sin and suffering. The dramatic confrontations were meant as a means to an end, an aid to personal holiness.

The process continued beyond simple acknowledgement. After being bullied into repentance, members needed to take steps to prevent similar failings in the future. This began with ritual cleansing. An exorcism would commence, with community coordinators attempting to drive away the spirit of the Devil. Such a process was necessary, leaders believed, because of the activity of the Devil in the world today. Their Baptism of the Holy Spirit had made them aware of spiritual realities, both heavenly (angels) and hellish (demons). Good things were, quite simply, of God and bad of the Devil. In this way, personal faults and failings took on a spiritual significance, testifying to the presence of evil spirits. Community exorcisms, even those not officially sanctioned by the Church, looked to free members from such bondage. Leaders would pray fervently over the individual, attempting to cast out demons in the name of Jesus. Oftentimes, this process concluded with True House coordinators burning personal belongings. Hittinger recalled losing his books, deemed harmful because of his studiousness. Others, no doubt, lost

clothes or mirrors or hairbrushes because of vanity. Such a thorough cleansing, leaders hoped, would remove not only items associated with the demonic, but also those that might lead to a relapse.

The sessions concluded with a series of pledges. The individual vowed to respect his/her head's authority. "These promises covered a wide spectrum of the person's life," explained Hittinger. "If a student was spending too much time with his academic work, he would promise not to study so much—or even to lower his grade average as an exercise in humility."³ The community adapted these pledges to the individual. Tolosko, reprimanded for flirtation and homesickness, swore to limit her contact with the opposite sex and her family.⁴ Leaders also emphasized the necessity of secrecy, even from ecclesial and secular authorities. Neither priests, students, professors, nor parents would understand the love and responsibility of breakthrough ministry, the coordinators told them. To speak publically of them would bring unnecessary scandal and jeopardize the future of the community. Members thus swore themselves to silence, hoping to keep intact the group that had been so important in their life.

When word of these practices did get out in 1975, it cast doubt on the entire Renewal. True House, after all, had occupied a prominent place in the early Renewal. Its members had worked tirelessly for the Spirit, organizing the first Charismatic conferences at Notre Dame, distributing the majority of early Charismatic literature and tapes to prayer

³ "True House"

⁴ "Catholic Pentecostal Movement Charged with Spiritual Coercion," *St. Petersburg Times*, 13 Sept 1975

groups across the nation, and traveling extensively to lead retreats.⁵ The news of such disturbing practices, especially relating to such a prominent community, had the potential to discredit the entire Movement. How prevalent, wondered non-Charismatics and clergy members, were such practices within prayer groups and covenant communities? What else might leaders be hiding behind their joyful meetings and enthusiastic praise?

The revelation of breakthrough ministry prompted a firestorm of criticism about the Renewal. Ecclesiastical authorities openly worried about the autonomy of Charismatic groups. “It was never reported to me,” reported the supervising bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend of the exorcisms and abuse of authority. “How do you stop a horse from running away when you don’t know the horse is running away?”⁶ Mainstream Catholic journalists, as well, began voicing their concerns about the Renewal. Rick Casey expressed doubts about the Movement’s future in a six-part expose in the *National Catholic Reporter*. “The charismatic renewal is the most exciting, vital, joyful thing happening in the church today,” he admitted, “[but] also the most frightening.” He openly worried about the stance of neo-Pentecostals towards modern culture and the outside world, the prevalent sense that only Charismatics could understand and deal with Charismatic problems. “This is the stuff from which crusades are made,” he noted apprehensively of their aggressive proselytism and self-assurance. “And crusades have not been among Christianity’s finest hours.”⁷ Perhaps the most damaging critiques, however, came from inside the Catholic Pentecostal

⁵ “Charismatics II”

⁶ “Whither Charismatics?” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 15 Aug 1975

⁷ “Charismatic Communities,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 12 Sept 1975

camp itself. Dr. William Storey, the professor who had brought the abuses of True House to light, fretted over the abuse of authority. The abuses of headship and submission, he speculated, might be characteristic “not only of...True House, but of the Movement as a whole.”⁸ He worried especially about the rise of covenant communities like True House, close-knit groups of Charismatics who lived in common. Storey even went so far as to recommend ecclesial investigations of all covenant groups, so sure was he that they were unhealthy for the Renewal. In this way, the True House incident sparked widespread suspicion of covenant communities amongst non-Charismatics and Charismatics alike.

For all who urged caution, however, just as many expressed consternation. Other Charismatics vocally defended the actions of covenant communities. “I wish you would use *NCR* to publish the good news of Jesus and the work of restoration his Spirit is doing,” wrote Sister Pauline Krismanich exasperatedly.⁹ Dr. William Brennan echoed these concerns, coming as well to the defense of covenant groups. “If one could judge the charismatic renewal in general on the basis of the antics or errors,” he reasoned, “then just as surely one could judge the state of the Catholic Church by this alcoholic priest...or that authoritarian bishop.”¹⁰ Even those who had been part of True House sprung to its aid, emphasizing the good over the bad. “We tried to do something fairly heroic,” explained Lee Gilbert. “We tried to create a stable Christian environment. We missed...partially because no one comes out of the womb a professional in everything.” he admitted.

⁸ “Whither Charismatics”

⁹ “Debate...on Charismatic Renewal,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 5 Sept 1975

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Outsiders and Charismatics alike needed to evaluate True House on what it was, he argued, not what it turned into. “While it lasted,” he noted, “it was in many ways a thing of beauty.” Gilbert had harsh words for those who would criticize the group’s leader Jim Byrne. Byrne had often butted heads with community members and had his share of personal faults, he acknowledged, “but he tried like crazy to help us which is more than can be said for others who could and should be helping but are not and cannot.”¹¹

Such comments spoke to the contentious debate over the formation of lay covenant communities. Were covenant communities leading people to holiness or to hell? When did spiritual direction morph into spiritual coercion? And, most importantly, to what extent did the events of True House speak to the direction of the overall Movement? Covenant communities represented, in many ways, a caricature of the broader Movement, groups more exaggerated in their devotion and their defects.

CHARISMA AND COMMITMENT: THE DEVELOPMENT OF COVENANT COMMUNITIES

Covenant communities had originally formed out of Charismatic prayer groups. As the Movement gathered steam in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Charismatic laypeople began changing the ways that they related to each other. Charismatics began experimenting with new patterns of community in Ann Arbor, MI (the Word of God); South Bend, IN (the People of Praise); Rutherford, NJ (Ignatius House); Dallas, TX

¹¹ “Charismatic: ‘We Tried,’” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 12 Sept 1975

(Children of God's Delight); San Francisco, CA (St. John the Baptist); Steubenville, OH (Servants of Christ the King); and Gaithersburg, MD (Mother of God).

The Word of God in Ann Arbor best illustrates this transition. Founded in 1968 by recent graduates of Notre Dame (Steve Clark, Ralph Martin, Gerry Rauch, and Jim Cavnar), the prayer group met at St. Mary's Catholic Student Center, the parish meant for all University of Michigan students. The gatherings, while starting off small, grew exponentially in just two years. By 1970, the WOG attracted hundreds of participants each week. A growing membership necessitated a growing structure, and soon the most devoted of Charismatics took on roles as head prophets, hospitality coordinator, music minister, etc. Such a rapid increase affected the group's relationships with St. Mary's, as well. With such an important role, the WOG wanted a greater voice in parish affairs; however, the other parishioners of the student center disliked their growing association with the Pentecostals. St. Mary's was more than just the WOG, they believed. These tensions led the WOG to break off from its parish home, becoming an entity unto itself. The most dedicated of the group formalized their covenant community in 1970, pledging to live together in service of the Lord. This new style of life, based on shared prayer, meals, and spiritual development, proved immensely popular, attracting between 600 and 1000 people to WOG by 1973.¹²

¹² Roberta Catharine Keane, "Formal Organization and Charisma in a Catholic Pentecostal Community," PhD diss U of Michigan, 1974, 34-107; *Varieties of Campus Ministries: Seven Case Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Church Society for College Work, 1973)

True House had a similar history. Though begun as a prayer group for Notre Dame students, it quickly evolved into something much more committed. Graduating seniors Jim Byrne and Peter Edwards led the way. Wanting to devote themselves to Charismatic ministry fulltime, these men founded True House in 1968 close to the South Bend campus. They took the name from two sources, the donor of the house (Dr. Robert True) and from John 8:12.¹³ Byrne and Edwards hoped the house could offer young adults the formative experience of living in religious community. Though initially not living together, the members of True House took their lead from the WOG, formalizing themselves into a covenant community of twenty-two young people in 1971. This number had grown to over 50 by 1972, with increasing numbers of students wanting to more radically seek holiness.¹⁴

Covenant communities across the nation followed this pattern. Kevin Ranaghan and Paul DeCelles were instrumental in starting the People of Praise, a network of Charismatics in South Bend, IN. Over 800 people had joined together at the community's peak, living in 35 households throughout the city.¹⁵ Other prominent communities included the Mother of God (Gaithersburg, VA), Children of God's Delight (Dallas, TX), Servants of the Light (Minneapolis, MN), and Servants of Christ the King (Steubenville, OH). The Servants of Christ the King adopted a somewhat unique structure. At the invitation of President Fr. Michael Scanlan, T.O.R. (who, not coincidentally, was also

¹³ "If I do bear witness to myself, my testimony is true...even if I do judge, my judgement is true."

¹⁴ "Charismatics II"

¹⁵ "Charismatics Find a Home," *South Bend Tribune*, 7 Aug 1977; John Ferrone, "Why the Promise Failed," *Fidelity*, June 1986, 7-8

leader of the Servants), the Charismatic group moved onto the campus of Franciscan University of Steubenville, OH in the late 1970s. Scanlan put group members in charge of newly created faith households. Adopting names like the Knights of the Holy Queen and Handmaids of the Lord, these groupings of ten to twenty students were expected to live, pray, eat, and even play intramural sports together.¹⁶ The Franciscan leader hoped that such households could create positive peer pressure on the Steubenville campus, as well as extending covenant life to a younger generation. In this way, covenant communities became a common sight by the mid to late 1970s, as Charismatics banded together in pursuit of greater faith and holiness.

These communities had developed as a result of a number of factors, but most prominently a longing for intimacy, post-conversion zeal, and a distaste for secular culture. The 1970s was a time of rising popularity for the Charismatic Movement, which worried many of its longest participants. These were people used to gathering in crowded living rooms and cramped church basements, not massive auditoriums or gymnasiums. Many felt cheated by the growing popularity of mass meetings, believing that, for everything that was gained in atmosphere and excitement, there was something lost in intimacy and accountability.¹⁷ The actions of group leaders spoke to this longing. The largest prayer meetings adopted biweekly gatherings, with one open to visitors and the other reserved for

¹⁶ Kevin McLaughlin, "Father Michael Scanlan Leads Franciscan University to Rebirth," *Religious News Service*, 12 Jan 1987 and "At U. of Steubenville, Theology is a Factor in Every Class," *Religious News Service*, 14 Jan 1987

¹⁷ Justin Gillis, "The Believers Next Door," *The Washington Post Magazine* 13 April 1997, accessed online at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/mogmain.htm>

community members only.¹⁸ Sub-communities began emerging, as well. These sub-groups, composed of married women or young adult men, hoped to segment the broader membership into smaller, more intimate groups. Such steps spoke to a desire for closer relationships within the larger prayer group and, ultimately, foreshadowed the creation of covenant communities.¹⁹

This re-grouping had a spiritual, in addition to organizational, dimension to it. As membership skyrocketed, leaders found it increasingly difficult to minister to everyone present. The early Charismatics were a largely homogenous group, composed mostly of white college students. Their similar backgrounds allowed leaders to focus on the struggles commonly affecting young adults (peer pressure, sexuality, binge drinking, etc.). Such teaching lost its power, however, when broadened to include the married, middle-aged, and even youth. “It became increasingly difficult to build a cohesive Body and give meaningful teachings that would touch every level,” the Community of God’s Love in Steubenville, OH explained to its members of the decision to form sub-groups.²⁰ In some cases, this teaching could be more than just ineffective, but even harmful. Children, for example, were simply not equipped to hear teaching about sexual matters, a topic that desperately

¹⁸ Keane, “Formal Organization and Charisma in a Catholic Pentecostal Community,” 40-46

¹⁹ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”; “Charismatics III: In Bar or Car, Praise the Lord,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 5 Sept 1975; Terry Malone, “Ignatius House: An Experiment in Pentecostal Community,” *New Catholic World* (Nov/Dec 1974)

²⁰ “Focus: Praise Meeting,” *The Word of God’s Love: The Newsletter of the Community of God’s Love*, November 1977

needed to be addressed amongst young adults. Leaders believed that greater individual attention would solve this problem of teaching, in addition to worries of intimacy.

Leaders also worried about Christian accountability. As numbers increased, so did the chance of anonymity. The Charismatic Renewal had been so effective at leading people to holiness precisely because sin could not be hidden: everyone knew everyone. This changed as prayer meetings expanded. Accountability, and the desire to enforce it, was only possible in a close-knit community. True House leader Jim Byrne believed in the power of small, intimate groups. He explained this to his fellow Charismatics, asking rhetorically “How can you die for yourself with 50 people?” Accountability depended on long-term relationships. Only your best friends, he explained, “[knew] all the nasty things that can be hidden” from an outsider.²¹ These twin emphases, more applicable advice and less anonymity, provided some of the impetus pushing Charismatics into community.

The zeal for conversion also fostered the growth of Christian communities. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit became a turning point for many. After such an experience, people restructured their schedules, careers, lifestyles, etc., all to put Christ at the center. They did this not resentfully, but joyfully and enthusiastically, almost over-eager to bear any burden for the sake of their now-risen Lord. Peter Williamson recalled this desire vividly. “I was very influenced by reading about St. Francis of Assisi,” he related, “so I gave up my shoes and went barefoot from May to October.” This passion led him to seek

²¹ “Charismatics II”; “Pilgrimage,” *The Word of God’s Love: The Newsletter of the Community of God’s Love*, November 1977

out greater and greater sacrifices, which encouraged him to join the Ann Arbor covenant community. “There was such a romantic, idealistic characteristic to what we were doing and it was profoundly Christian,” he recollected.²² Adrian Reimers reported having a similar excitement when joining the People of Praise. It was, in his mind, simply a part of responding to the Lord’s blessing.

We had experienced God’s love powerfully in the initial charismatic experience. We had seen miracles and healings—drug addicts and alcoholics freed from bondage, cripples made well, broken marriages healed, wicked men and women turning to God. We were hearing the truths of the Gospel proclaimed clearly and unashamedly. We could hear the call to holiness, and we were zealous to do the will of the Lord.

Covenant community life provided an outlet for such zeal. Here he was, Reimers related, surrounded by people “committed to sharing their lives in an explicitly Christian way, [living in] a community in which our common and individual lives would be led under the guidance of and by the power of the Holy Spirit.” “It,” he concluded simply, “was a good idea.”²³ This burning desire to complete one’s conversion, to dive deeper and commit more fully, helped set the stage for the sudden emergence of covenant communities.

A deep-set suspicion of secular culture also encouraged Charismatics to band together. This tendency (also present in their Pentecostal forbearers) emerged out of two perceptions, one positive and the other negative. Many believers simply felt that they could seek God better in Christian community than they could in secular society. Stemming from

²² David Crumm, “Word of God: The Rise and Fall of a Heavenly Empire,” *Detroit Free Press Magazine*, 20 Sept 1992: 4-7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18

²³ Adrian Reimers, “Charismatic Covenant Community: A Failed Promise,” *Fidelity*, vol 5, No. 6 (May 1986): 30-40

this same desire for holiness, this feeling drew Charismatics into lifestyles, careers, and even living situations in which it was easier to live out their faith and bring glory to God.²⁴ There was a profound “need,” noted Charismatic priest George Kosicki, “of a Christian space to be free to be Christian and the need of common worship to support the members.”²⁵ This represented less a fear of the world and more a profound indifference to it, perhaps best illustrated by Charismatics’ choice of music. Most began listening to contemporary Christian songs on the radio simply because they found them speaking to what was happening in their everyday lives. Fr. Charles Irvin explained this impulse succinctly. “Their goal,” he concluded after a thorough examination of the WOG, “is...to have the Church leave the things of this world...[and] rely solely on the Lord Jesus.”²⁶ Thus, the desire for Jesus led Charismatics to neglect everything else.

At the same time that attraction pulled Catholic Pentecostals into community, distaste for secular culture also pushed them. Charismatics viewed the Devil as a much more active figure than most of their co-religionists. People exposed to the wonders of supernatural good become, quite naturally, more attuned to the horrors of supernatural evil. Experiences of tongues, healings, and all that God could bring, therefore, led Charismatics to be more fearful of what Satan might do if given the chance. They perceived his handiwork all around them. The rise of abortion, America’s enemies abroad, declining

²⁴ Catherine Anthony, “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal: Problems and Promises,” *Our Sunday Visitor*, Dec 2, 1979, 3, 5

²⁵ George Kosicki, C.S.B., “Renewed Religious Life: The Dynamics of Re-discovery,” *Review for Religious* vol. 35, no. 1 (January 1976): 14-28

²⁶ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

Church attendance, personal setbacks, and even the reporting of the secular news media were not random happenings, but hellish machinations. “This whole series on crime and violence,” one WOG member declared after watching a news broadcast, “and not one mention of Jesus. Why won’t anybody in the newspapers print the truth that Jesus is the answer to these problems?”²⁷ Oversights like this were intention, Charismatics believed, all signs of the growing power of Satan in the world today. This fear of the world outside thus pushed them closer into covenant community, into a place where they knew they would be safe. Only within a group of equally dedicated Charismatics, they believed, could help them navigate the shoals of Satanic deception and arrive at the rock of Christ.

These tendencies did more than just encourage community, but also helped structure them. Given the confusion of secular society, Charismatics looked to Biblical precedent, and not psychological gurus, to organize these covenant groups. What could offer a better example for modern-day Catholic Pentecostals, they reasoned, than the lifestyle of those present at the original Pentecost? Biblical ideas thus affected every aspect of community life. This appeared most visibly in the very name. Charismatics took the idea of a “covenant” from the Old Testament, as it represented a promise between a select group of believers and God. Just like the Hebrews and the Ten Commandments or Noah after the flood, many Charismatics felt that their communities were embarking on a special journey with God. Incoming members had to swear allegiance not only to the Catholic

²⁷ “Charismatics V: What Tapes Tell about Sex Roles, Healing, Prophecy,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 19 Sept 1975

Church, therefore, but also to the community “covenant.” This community was part of their Baptismal call, and should be respected as they respected their Lord.²⁸

Biblical ideas about leadership, as well, influenced covenant life. The early Christians of Acts were hierarchical and male-dominated, directed by elders and not democratic rule. Covenant groups adopted a similar structure. Authority flowed downward, starting at the Lord and falling next upon community coordinators. Known unofficially as elders, these men were the unquestioned heads of community and authority on teaching. Male and female deacons occupied the rung below, implementing the decisions of the elders and assisting in other community tasks. A variety of other subpositions existed below these, and then finally the general membership. While not authoritarian, this system was certainly undemocratic, as coordinators were neither elected nor limited to a certain number of terms.²⁹

This idea of leadership tended to harden over time. By the late 1970s, the elder-deacon organization had coalesced into a more formal system of “headship” and “submission.” Typifying covenant communities of this age, headship and submission solidified ideas about hierarchy. Individual members adopted “heads,” who served as a community mentor and spiritual director. These heads, in turn, submitted themselves to those above them and so on until reaching the coordinators (who submitted to each other).

²⁸ “Mother of God Community Covenant,” Washington Post Magazine, last updated 13 April 1997, accessed 15 Mar 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/documents/covenant.htm>

²⁹ Stephen Clark, *Building Christian Communities: Strategy for Renewing the Church* (South Bend, IN: Ave Maria, 1972), 138-139; *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

This system had emerged out of concerns with accountability and spiritual growth. Heads oversaw every aspect of their charges' lives, offering opinions on prayer habits, leisure choices, dating prospects, even hobbies.³⁰ Such steadfast relationships, community members believed, were necessary for rooting out the subtle lies of the enemy. Was working after hours a sign of dedication or distrust in God's plan? Were romantic gestures for one's spouse a sign of love or of insecurity? Heads helped their charges work through such struggles, often pointing out the spiritual significance of temporal trials.³¹

Charismatics attached theological, and not just personal, significance to headship. The Charismatic spirituality, they noted, hinged on giving up self-control and instead submitting to God's control. This process, so similar to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, meant that people were often the thing standing in their own way, preventing them from experiencing God's love. Believers needed to be free to respond to the call of the Lord, to let themselves be overwhelmed by the Spirit. Headship prepared people for such self-resignation, Charismatic leaders held. "In order to be able to submit himself to that plan, a person must develop a spirit of submission," he continued, "shown by submitting oneself to authority."³² This idea was remarkably similar to the guiding premise of Catholic religious life, that ceding authority in temporal matters helped perfect divine virtues. Jim Byrne openly stated as much to his fellow Charismatics in True House. "In a very real way in intense communities," he proclaimed, "those who are heads of that community stand in

³⁰ "Charismatics III"

³¹ Gillis, "The Believers Next Door"

³² "Charismatics III"

the place of God.”³³ Thus, covenant communities structured themselves not only based on what they believed might aid believers in this life, but also prepare them for the next.

Limits existed on this authority, at least in the early days of community. Jim Russo of the WOG took it upon himself to make sure fellow community members understood proper domain of headship. “The authority of the head of a household should not be absolute,” he cautioned his fellow Charismatics in 1975. “Headship should extend to common life, but should not extend to who your friends are, where you can work, what you can read....the very words give it away. I have a ‘head,’ like I don’t have a head on my body?”³⁴ Indeed, his words echoed the intentions of Charismatic leaders. Those like Ralph Martin and Steve Clark of the WOG had no intention of brainwashing their charges. They simply wanted to offer guidance to other laypeople wading through the same struggles, protecting them especially against the lies of the Devil.

Dating relationships, for example, could be particularly confusing for young adults. Love could be misleading, explained WOG member Nancy Pflug in 1975. Physical and personal compatibility received so much attention in secular society, but often at the cost of focusing on spiritual compatibility. “I’d like to like him,” she admitted when speaking of her future husband,

[but] the primary thing I’m looking for is not an attraction or feeling that the match was made in heaven. It’s true that there is a unique relationship, but what should go through my mind and does is, [D]oes this man want to serve the Lord? What is the Lord

³³ “Charismatics II”; “Growing Charismatic Movement is Facing Internal Discord over a Teaching Known as ‘Discipling,’” *New York Times*, 16 Sept 1975

³⁴ “Charismatics III”

expecting of him? Can I support that? Can I put myself behind what God asks him to do? Will he make a good head for me?³⁵

Jesus, Pflug maintained, should be at the center of one's dating journey just as he should be at the center of every other aspect of one's life. Heads could hold members accountable, making sure reality reflected desire. For this reason, heads played an active role in the dating culture of many of these Charismatic communities. Together, they would meet and help young people determine when they were ready for dating, whom they should date, and whether they should marry.³⁶ It was, in their minds, necessary guidance for an area of life so perilous to the youth of the Church.

Covenant communities envisioned themselves providing advice not only during dating, but in all facets of male/female relationships. Just as individual members should respect their heads, they believed, women should defer to their husbands and other male authority figures. When asked whether he could support such an arrangement, especially in an era known for women's rights, a male member of the WOG responded simply with an, "Of course, we're Biblical."³⁷ Covenant leaders justified these ideas by referring primarily to the writings of St. Paul, the apostle well known for his opinions on male authority. Women, too, endorsed this style of leadership. "That's what it says in the Bible," justified Teresa Ensell of the Servants of Christ the King. "We had lived the other

³⁵ "Charismatics III"

³⁶ "Charismatics V"; Gillis, "The Believers Next Door"

³⁷ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*; Joseph Fichter, "How It Looks to a Social Scientist," *New Catholic World* (Nov/Dec 1974): 244-248; Thomas J. Csordas, *Language, Charisma, and Creativity: The Ritual Life of a Religious Movement* (Berkeley, CA: U of California, 1997), 85; Joseph Fichter, S.J., "Women in the Charismatic Renewal," *National Catholic Reporter*, 28 Sept 1973

way where I tried to run everything. But this way is in God's order and the peace I feel now is indescribable. I don't feel dominated or put down or second class or any of that"³⁸ Heads and community rules guided Charismatics in such relationships, offering suggestions to help couples live out their divinely-inspired gender roles.

For this reason, women had limited options for leadership within Charismatic communities. While accepted as prophets and even sub-community leaders, they generally did not serve as overall coordinators. The only domain in which women should have authority, most members of the all-male leadership felt, should be over other women. Notable exceptions did exist to this rule, however. Judith Tydings and Edith Difato, for example, founded the Mother of God community of Gaithersburg, MD in the mid-1970s. They were the ultimate authorities, directing the activities of men within the group. Yet, Tydings made sure to emphasize her personal subordination to her husband. She only maintained her authority over the group, she explained, as a result of his continued approval.³⁹ These gender roles, in addition to their emphasis on more authoritative leadership, set Charismatics apart from American culture of the 1970s and, consequently, made them more reliant on these covenant communities for advice and support.

Charismatics did resemble the counterculture in some aspects, however, most notably the hippie communes. Embracing the Biblical idea of life in common, covenant communities promoted a brand of Christian socialism amongst their members. They did

³⁸ Kevin McLaughlin, "Local and National Charismatic Groups Tied to U of Steubenville," *Religious News Service*, 16 Jan 1987

³⁹ Csordas, *Language, Charisma, and Creativity*, 85

this most commonly through a tithe, usually representing somewhere between 5-10% of members' secular income. The community used these funds to provide for members. Most covenant groups, for example, offered free or discounted housing for those who wished to live together. Others financed all-Charismatic schools, so as to provide their children with a truly religious education. These funds also paid salaries. As communities grew in size, so did their payrolls. The South Bend Charismatics not only had to pay the community coordinators, but also their secretaries and the salaries of those working in the community school and community publishing house. In contrast with the secular world, however, groups determined these wages by state of life, not ability or seniority. A childless coordinator in the WOG, for example, earned \$300 a month; whereas a secretary with a wife and three children earned \$1180.⁴⁰ In this sense, communities came to endorse the moderate redistribution of wealth, seeing precedent in Biblical times and realizing the need to lessen divisions among members.

For the larger communities at least, the business of maintaining community became, well, a business. Charismatic Renewal Services, an organization administered by the People of Praise in South Bend, IN, helped distribute tapes and pamphlets to prayer groups across the nation. By 1977, CRS was bringing in somewhere between two and three million dollars in revenue. Such success prompted the POP to purchase the

⁴⁰ Keane, "Formal Organization and Charisma in a Catholic Pentecostal Community," 34, 83; "Charismatics III"; Suzanne Rozell Scorsone, "Authority, Conflict, and Integration: The Catholic Charismatics Renewal Movement and the Roman Catholic Church, PhD diss U of Toronto, 1979, 96; "Charismatic Communities"; David Hulén, "Charismatics Drive 'Big Business,'" *South Bend Tribune*, 7 Aug 1977

abandoned LaSalle hotel in downtown South Bend, paying just over \$150,000 for the nine stories of office space.⁴¹ The WOG in Ann Arbor had similar success with Servant Publications, a publishing house devoted to printing books and pamphlets about the Renewal. The community newsletter, *New Covenant*, reached some 60,000 Charismatics at its height. These operations brought in similarly large profits, allowing the WOG to purchase a two-story building that had formerly housed the University of Michigan marching band.⁴² The Mother of God in Maryland ventured into a different area entirely: computer processing. The community founded Orange Systems in the 1980s, staffing it almost entirely with in-house talent. This venture, along with the Charismatic magazine *The Word Among Us*, brought in millions of dollars of profit to the MOG.⁴³ These facts and figures help illustrate the growing size and influence of Charismatic covenant communities.

Community-sponsored businesses illustrated another important characteristic, the temptation towards insularity. Those living in covenant communities tended to forget about the rest of the world. Employment provided just one example. Jobs within Servant Publications, Orange Systems, etc. were often the most coveted by members. So committed to living a Christian, certainly countercultural life, they appreciated companies in which they knew their values were shared. “The ideal thing was to work for the

⁴¹ Hulen, “Charismatics Drive ‘Big Business’”; Johnathon White, “Religious Group ‘All Moved In,’” *South Bend Tribune*, 25 April 1976

⁴² “Charismatic Communities”

⁴³ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”

community,” Elena Herrera reported of her decision to leave her better-paying secular job. She was not alone, as many Charismatics traded their outside careers for community work, valuing the faith atmosphere over the paycheck or prestige.⁴⁴

This preference for all things community pervaded covenant life. Charismatics tended to have only Charismatic friends, to go to Charismatic functions, and worship with Charismatic believers. Part of this tendency had to do, quite simply, with their weekly schedules. Terry Malone recalled the obligations of living at Ignatius House in Rutherford, NJ. At the bare minimum, he recounted, each person committed themselves to eight hours of time together with the community: Mass and prayer meeting on Sunday, weekly subgroup meetings, and participation on one of the community committees (prophecy, childcare, music, etc.). These commitments only increased for those living together in common households. In addition to the duties already listed, they would gather for meals and prayer at least 2-3 times a day.⁴⁵ Such activities consumed the free time of those active in the Movement, even becoming a running joke in Charismatic circles. “One of the signs of the Charismatic Renewal,” joked True House’s Jim Byrne, “is meetings.”⁴⁶ Such a quip was doubly humorous for those involved, as they were well accustomed to looking for other signs (tongues, miracles, etc.) of God breaking into everyday life.

Beyond the difficulties of scheduling, many Charismatics simply lost interest in the world outside their communities. Living together with these other believers was, quite

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Malone, “Ignatius House”; *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

⁴⁶ “Charismatics II”

naturally, fun and fulfilling. “I loved the feeling of belonging to a group of people who had a deep faith and prayer life,” recalled former MOG member Jane West. “During our first few years there was plenty of fun: picnics, skits, concerts, summer camp for the kids and so forth.”⁴⁷ Just as with their work, these people enjoyed spending their time with likeminded believers. The love of covenant life was so strong, at times, that it provoked criticism from those in the world outside. “THE COMMUNITY, THE COMMUNITY, THE COMMUNITY!” exclaimed Fr. Charles Irvine in his observations of the WOG in 1973. He worried about the devotion that Charismatics showed to their covenant groups, noting that many “unconsciously equate[d] the presence of the community with the presence of God.” “It all exists merely to bring us to God, never to substitute for God,” he warned. “When it does it becomes an idol, a false god.”⁴⁸ Whether this attraction was ultimately good or bad, it was certainly present. Charismatics in community genuinely appreciated those they lived with and chose to spend most of their time with them. In a very real sense, therefore, covenant communities became worlds unto themselves, isolating believers from secular society socially as well as temporally.

Such an internal focus became particularly problematic in the areas of politics and social justice. In an era seemingly defined by war protest and mass marches, the Charismatics were largely apolitical. Though the members of True House collectively donated some 400-500 volunteer hours each week, leader Jim Byrne estimated, the vast

⁴⁷ “Jane West,” Washington Post Magazine, last updated 13 April 1997, accessed 14 Mar 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/members/west.htm>

⁴⁸ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

majority were devoted to forming existing members and not to those living outside the community.⁴⁹ Observer Robert Johnson noted a similar insularity amongst members of the WOG, reporting that few in the community were even aware of the upcoming presidential election, relevant national news items, or even local poverty initiatives. “This mission of the Word of God at this point in time seems to be to get people inside their community,” he stated, explaining that “one hears more talk of ‘brother’ and ‘sister’ than ‘neighbor.’”⁵⁰ Charismatic leaders openly conceded this point. “Social outreach was a developing concern within the community,” WOG coordinator Ralph Martin admitted in reply, “but not the first order of business.”⁵¹ Charismatic communities generally neglected social involvement.

This lack of social consciousness stemmed, in large part, from Charismatic theology. For Charismatic communities, just as with Pecos, change happened on the personal level. Whether through loving relationship with Jesus or emotional testimony from other believers, lives changed as a result of individual encounters, not abstract social processes. Jesuit priest Harold Cohen spoke openly to this fact, arguing that societal reform would come from “the renewal and/or restoration of the lordship of Jesus Christ in individuals and, through them, in the Church, the churches and society.”⁵² The individual relationship had to come first. Terry Malone further elaborated on this position. He

⁴⁹ “Charismatics II”

⁵⁰ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Harold F. Cohen, “Restoring the Lordship of Jesus,” *New Catholic World* (Nov/Dec 1974)

defended the Renewal's emphasis on community, even as he acknowledged its shortcomings in social justice. "What has happened because of the emphasis on self-development," he argued, "is the creation of an environment in which the traditional corporal works of mercy are a way of life, forming a warm and caring spirit of generosity. Not only is this widespread in the community...it overflows to guests who want to learn about the community, and to strangers...needing shelter, food, and sometimes clothing."⁵³ Similar to the philosophy the Pecos monks took to their prayer and community life, covenant communities gave primary to their relationship with Jesus. Only from this personalized love and joy, they believed, could members begin to serve and love those in the wider community around them.

Beyond theological presuppositions and organizational tendencies, practical considerations also informed this social apathy. Living in such intimate community, covenant Charismatics found it necessary to skirt controversial issues like Social Security or the war in Vietnam. "The blunt and pragmatic fact," noted sociologist-priest Joseph Fichter, "is that prayer groups would be torn apart" if they opened up their meetings to political debates.⁵⁴ The case of Jim Russo offers a particularly vivid example. A longtime protestor of the Vietnam War, Russo refused to pay his taxes, hoping this act of civil disobedience might help change U.S. foreign policy. This had stopped, however, once Russo had joined the WOG. In conversations with his head, Ralph Martin, Russo decided

⁵³ Malone, "Ignatius House"

⁵⁴ Fichter, "How it Looks to a Social Scientist"

that his one-man crusade would be a distraction from the broader mission, that of bringing Jesus to the world.⁵⁵ Covenant groups adopted a community-first mindset, wary of engaging in politics for fear of the division it could spark amongst their members. Though the WOG occasionally involved itself in local elections, it did so only in blatant self-interest. They began petitioning the Ann Arbor City Council in 1975, for example, because existing housing codes limited the number of single adults that could live together at a single residence, a factor limiting the size of community households.⁵⁶ Such activities were, by and large, the only political activism undertaken by covenant communities.⁵⁷

Though spurning political causes, Charismatics in community took up spiritual activism with evangelical fervor. They sincerely sought to live out the Christian life through their individual actions, visiting the sick, ministering to the hopeless, and more generally performing the spiritual works of mercy. One of their most successful and consistent areas of outreach centered on Christian ecumenism. Covenant communities literally made interfaith dialogue part of their life, as groups like the Word of God and People of Praise came to welcome large numbers (up to 45% at one point in the WOG) of Charismatic Protestants to their ranks. Life in the Spirit, leaders reasoned, qualified *any* Christian for life in the community. Catholic Pentecostals had high hopes for this ecumenical contact, seeing it as a precursor to Christian reunification. “I think that God is

⁵⁵ “Charismatic Communities”

⁵⁶ “Charismatics V”

⁵⁷ For exceptions, see Richard Dunstan, *The Bible on the Border: How Fr. Rick Thomas and his Friends Learned to Serve the Poor of Mexico by Taking God at His Word* (Vado, NM: Lord’s Ranch Press, 2009)

moving to make [the Charismatics] flow together like a mighty river and out of their unity bring something to all Christian churches,” declared WOG leader Ralph Martin.⁵⁸ Adrian Reimers offered a similarly hopeful assessment. “[S]eeing the warm relationships we had begun to form with Protestant charismatics,” he noted, “we began to hope for the coming of an end to four hundred years of Christian disunity.”⁵⁹ Outside observations confirmed these internal sources. “One would wish for a little Augustine or Thomas Merton to balance the priority assigned to David Wilkerson’s books,” wrote one non-Charismatic of a community’s love of Pentecostal authors.⁶⁰ Catholic Charismatics hoped to take advantage of this enthusiasm and, while maintaining their own denominational identity, use their communities to build bridges between Christians.

Charismatics implemented this philosophy most visibly in the community Mass and the distribution of the Eucharist. According to Church law, Catholics are forbidden from distributing the Eucharist (also known as Communion) to outsiders or from accepting non-Catholic communion themselves. This rigidity stems from the Catholic belief in transubstantiation, the process through which the bread and wine are literally though not visibly transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Protestants hold a less strict view of the Holy Host, seeing it as something more akin to a memorial. To them, it is a sacrifice that believers continue to remember, not one that continues to happen. These reasons led the Catholic hierarchy to forbade Catholics from offering communion to outsiders (as they

⁵⁸ Ralph Martin, “How Shall We Relate to Church?” *New Catholic World*, (Nov/Dec 1974): 249-252

⁵⁹ Reimers, “Charismatic Covenant Community”

⁶⁰ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

would not understand its holy significance) and from accepting Protestant communion (as doing so would imply equivalence with the Catholic Eucharist).

Such a hard and fast rule, however, proved difficult to enforce in a loving community. Members often allowed non-Catholics to partake of the Eucharist and frequently participated in non-Catholic services. When pressured to end such practices, the WOG gave up community Mass altogether, so reluctant were its members to separate themselves from each other. In this sense, denominational identity suffered the same fate as political activism; it too was sacrificed for the greater good.⁶¹ As Adrian Reimers of the People of Praise observed after his departure, “the totality of the covenant commitment” forced his community to “become very much like a church itself.”⁶² With community as the highest good, therefore, other issues fell aside, allowing for largely harmonious living between Protestant and Catholic Charismatics.

Other drawbacks emerged in community life. Critics worried about the effects of peer pressure within covenant groups. As communities stopped reaching out to the world, worried Fr. Charles Irvin, they became more and more self-referential. Holiness would not be judged by external standards, but rather adherence to a common, collective goal. “We need *more* character diversity in religion, not mass-produced sameness,” he wrote of the WOG in Ann Arbor. Members tended to all pray the same way, to read the same books, and to focus on the same Biblical passages. This was the downside of loving and close-

⁶¹ Ibid; “Charismatics III”; Edward B. Fiske, “‘Charismatic Renewal’ Is Flourishing in American Churches,” *Bennington Banner*, 12 Sept 1974

⁶² “Charismatics III”; Reimers, “Charismatic Covenant Community”

knit community, Irvin believed. Members may have been “setting up a genuine counter culture,” but were they doing so at the cost of their individuality? Were they developing a “passive-dependence” on the community around them instead of promoting a one-on-one individual relationship with Christ?⁶³ Such questions swirled around these covenant communities, testifying simultaneously to their affective bonds and normative practices.

A sense of spiritual elitism permeated these Charismatic communities. Covenant groups displayed a certain smugness with regard to the rest of the Church. This came out, most visibly, in their attachment to their own attachment to community. “There was a saying that it was possible to live a Christian life at Notre Dame outside of True House,” one news reporter related in 1975, “but then it was also possible to live at the South Pole.”⁶⁴ Indeed, Charismatics tended to see their emotional and existentialist faith as the only way to follow the Gospels. Certainly, it was good that other people participated in Church life and evangelization, one *New York Times* article explained of the groups’ mindset, “but anybody who is more filled with the Spirit is a better witness.”⁶⁵ Notes of arrogance even appeared in the Charismatics’ hopes for the rest of the Church. Sister Susan Rakoczy offered a vivid example. “It is not perfect and will never be,” she wrote in defense of the Movement, “but it is leading people to a vibrant Christian life, which is more than can be said for other institutions and structures in this post conciliar age.”⁶⁶ In this way, the

⁶³ *Varieties of Campus Ministry*

⁶⁴ “Charismatics II”

⁶⁵ “Catholic Faction,” *New York Times*, 19 Mar 1978

⁶⁶ “Charismatics: The Readers’ Response,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 17 Oct 1975

enthusiasm of Charismatics, just as with Charismatic religious in their own communities, could be misconstrued as spiritual pride, even an attack on the status quo. “This is the way you live out Christianity,” they seemed to be saying (and sometimes openly said) to those around them.

Such drawbacks paled in comparison to the visible warmth of community life. Just as with Charismatic prayer groups, those in covenant communities became renowned for their friendliness to each other and to outsiders. The WOG was the envy even of other Charismatics, who recognized the uniqueness of their life together. “Secularized overuse has trivialized the words that describe the fruits of the Spirit—peacefulness, faithfulness, gentleness,” Jesuit priest and Charismatic John Haughey declared admiringly to the rest of his order, “but such words have to suffice to hint at the quality of [members’] lives.” Perhaps more amazing still, he noted, was how approachable and accessible the community members remained, despite such visible holiness. “They are very real, fun to be with, natural, with the problems everyone else has. They are not beady-eyed fanatics,” he concluded, “but they do love the Lord forthrightly, which you must admit is unusual.”⁶⁷ Fr. Edward O’Connor, C.S.C., evaluated True House similarly. “[The community] was extremely attractive to a lot of young people who found that it liberated them and left them free to live a joyful, committed Christian life,” he wrote in retrospect. This evaluation was not just a subjective phenomenon, but an objective fact. “I saw several examples of people who had not been able to put their lives on a stable basis,” he wrote approvingly, “but were

⁶⁷ John C. Haughey, “The Jesus People of Ann Arbor,” *America*, 12 Feb 1976, 142-145

able to do this with True House.”⁶⁸ With friendliness and fervor admired by other Charismatics, it truly appeared that covenant communities were doing something special in their life together.

Members promoted, if possible, even rosier views of these groups. Steve Valentino had nothing but good things to say about the Mother of God in Gaithersburg. To him, it had been nothing short of heavenly. “My feelings about the community were that it was a safe haven,” he explained lovingly, “a holy and secure place where people loved God and what he had done in their lives...a place for me where I no longer had to be overly concerned with what others might think of me and instead could rest comfortably in the knowledge that Christ loved me, he died for my sins, and he gave me eternal life.”⁶⁹ All across the nation, Charismatics wrote warmly of their communities, even those who had been part of the now-defunct True House. “When we think of True House,” Jack and Jill Boughton detailed, “what comes to mind is not psychological pressure, abuse of authority or fanatical narrowness of vision.” Certainly, they were not blind to its faults. “These things existed to some extent,” they admitted, “and we view them with sorrow and regret. But our overwhelming experience of community was an experience of the Lord’s love made manifest in the love of our brothers and sisters.”⁷⁰ Such optimism was widespread

⁶⁸ “Charismatics II”

⁶⁹ “Steve Valentino,” Washington Post Magazine, last updated 13 April 1997, accessed 14 Mar 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/members/valentino.htm>

⁷⁰ “Charismatics: The Readers’ Response”

across the Renewal, but particularly among those who had shared in covenant life. Few, if any, were willing to criticize a Movement that had brought them so much joy.

Certainly, discordant voices remained, urging caution to the growing numbers of Charismatics joining into community. Lauren Tolosko recounted the arrogance with which True House's leaders wielded their authority. "The coordinators felt confident that they could tear a person apart and put him back together again," she noted derisively.

Only God can do this effectively, and being motivated by love, he does not work with the tactics the charismatic community has been seen to employ. The consequences of these tactics were seen when the community fell apart. Each member had a serious faith crisis, and some had their very identities so obliterated that they are still struggling to recover.⁷¹

Other critics emerged as the 1970s progressed. Josephine Ford (a colleague of William Storey) spoke forcefully against the development of covenant communities. Ford expressed her displeasure with the Renewal in articles in *Dialog*, *Spiritual Frontiers*, *The Furrow*, and *Spiritual Life* and a 1975 book *Which Way for Catholic Charismatics?* She focused particularly on the communities of Ann Arbor and South Bend, criticizing their hierarchical structure, tendency towards uniformity, and self-absorption. All of these aspects needed to change, she believed, and could be changed through greater contact with the world around them. "Catholic Pentecostalism," she concluded, "must go out into the

⁷¹ "Whither Charismatics"

main body of the church, not to convert of ‘evangelize’ the converted, but to join hands with other Christians, to give and also receive from them.”⁷²

Such critical perspectives on covenant community life remained in the vast majority. Though observers and Charismatics expressed concerns about flaws so visible in True House (authoritarianism, social isolation, overspiritualization), most continued to see the South Bend. Particularly for those living in Steubenville, Ann Arbor, South Bend, Gaithersburg, San Francisco, etc., the saga of True House was just an aberration. It threatened to discredit the Renewal, but not to destroy it. This was evident, not only from the letters readers wrote in to the *National Catholic Reporter* in support of the Movement, but also in their continued membership. Covenant communities continued to flourish throughout the late 1970s, speaking to the confidence and attraction with which most Pentecostals viewed these groups. Theirs was a bright future, and they dreamed of a day in which the Renewal and these groups would set the world afire.

⁷² J. Massynberde Ford, “Neo-Pentecostalism within the Roman Catholic Communion,” *Dialog*, vol 13 (Winter 1974): 45; Josephine Massingberd Ford, “Mysticism and Roman Catholic Neo-Pentecostalism,” *Spiritual Frontiers*, Vol 6-7 (1975): 153-163; Josephine Ford, “Fly United—But Not in Too Close Formation—Reflections on the Neo-Pentecostal Movement,” *Spiritual Life*, vol 17, no. 8 (Spring 1971): 12-20; Ford, *Which Way for Catholic Pentecostals?*, 133; J. Massynberde Ford, “American Catholic Neo-Pentecostalism,” *The Furrow*, 26 (no. 4, 1975): 199-210

CHAPTER 5: “YOU TELL ME YOUR DREAMS, I’LL TELL YOU YOUR SOUL”: *CHARISMATIC DISCERNMENT & JUNGIAN DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY AT PECOS*

Abbot David Geraets had a vision, quite literally, for his ministry. In the midst of the tension at Benet Lake, he related dramatically to a group of Catholic Charismatics in 1981, he decided to put his trust in God, directly asking Him whether or not he should participate in the Renewal. “I went on my knees and said, ‘God, I’m not moving until you give me an answer,’” he recounted. God responded, but not as directly as the priest might have hoped, as the answer came to him over three nights in three separate dreams. In the first vision, God showed the young monk a map of the United States. “Little fires [were] breaking out all over the place,” he recalled, symbolizing how rapidly the Charismatic Renewal would spread across the country and renew God’s church. Such a message, while comforting, did not answer Geraets’ fundamental question: whether or not to continue as a Charismatic.

The second dream was similarly affirming yet ambiguous. Geraets saw a “river, a great big river,” as well as people swimming in the swift-moving water. They could “ignore the current and swim across it, move with the current, or move against the current, but they [couldn’t] stop the flow of the river,” the Abbot remembered. Such a vision, God told him, represented the ways in which people could react to the Renewal (indifference, acceptance, or resistance) while reaffirming that nothing would stop the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Again, the Lord had provided Geraets some consolation, but no concrete answers. The monk was beginning to feel frustrated, as the Lord had said nothing about his own relationship to the river.

Confirmation finally came on the third night. “I had a light that came to me from the top of my head straight on through my body to my toenails,” the Abbot remembered. “It had a gentleness to it...and there was a very vivid presence of God and he says, ‘Go and I’ll be with you....I want you in the Church and not outside the Church.’”¹ The Abbot took this experience of divine presence, though brief, to be his answer. “I’ve never known the Lord to be particularly verbose,” he joked. Such a series of visions informed Geraets’ participation in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, his future ministry at Pecos, and, indeed, the rest of his life after 1968.

In the ensuing years, Geraets still spoke of the power of dreams, but within a profoundly different context. “A person who tells me they know what their soul is like and doesn’t know their dreams is like a person who says, ‘I know what my face is like’ but doesn’t have a looking glass,” he proclaimed boldly in 2012. “There is no medium. The dream gives you a portrait of your psyche and soul. You tell me your dreams, I’ll tell you your soul.”² Such bold assertions were the fruit of the Abbot’s study of Jungian depth psychology, first begun in the early 1970s at Pecos. Through the writings of John Sanford and the personal direction of Morton Kelsey, both Episcopal priests and Christian Jungians, the Pecos superior had become fascinated with phenomena like “the shadow” and “projections.” The Benedictine thought so highly of such concepts, in fact, that he structured Pecos’ community and outreach to promote psychological health. By the late

¹ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Discerning Visions and Revelations,” 1981, talk given at Southern California Renewal Communities Conference, Van Nuys, CA [hereafter referred to as SCRC]

² “Abbot David Geraets OSB-‘Charismatic’ Pt 2,” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated Jan 20, 2012, accessed Mar 13, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sw-n5EKYnks&index=3&list=PL443B4AB73CA592FC>

1970s, the monastery had become one of the foremost centers of Christian Jungianism in the United States, promoting Jung's ideas through retreats, books, and its famed School for Spiritual Directors. Why would a Catholic monastery, particularly one structured around the Biblically-focused Charismatic Renewal, spend so much time and effort spreading a secular ideology? Worried by the excesses of Charismatic laypeople, the Pecos monks popularized Jungian depth psychology as a tool for evaluating the emotional, often intense spiritual experiences that were characteristic of the Movement.

DREAMS AND DISCIPLESHIP: THE FRIENDSHIP OF MORTON T. KELSEY AND DAVID GERAETS

That a Catholic monastery would turn to psychology at all is something of a historical aberration. Freudian thought, though not as anti-religious as many believe, was nonetheless condemned roundly by the Church.³ Though this position softened somewhat with official Vatican approval of psychology in 1953 and especially after the Second Vatican Council, many clergy and laity regarded the science of the mind with some suspicion.⁴ Many priests feared that psychoanalysis might take the place of the confessional or that talk of neuroses might replace knowledge of sin and guilt. "People who enter psychotherapy or counseling are not simply risking what they have, but who they are," psychology professor William F. Kraft warned clerics seeking counseling services in 1978. Though not willing to discount the practice altogether, Kraft urged

³ For an example of Freud's dialogue with Christian spirituality, see *Psychoanalysis and Faith: The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Oskar Pfister* (New York: Basic Books, 1964).

⁴ Richard P. Vaughan, S.J., "Religious and Psychotherapy," *Review for Religious*, vol. 17, no. 2 (March 1958): 73-82

religious to only consult Catholic psychologists with a proper reverence for Church teaching.⁵ Most clerics promoted a balanced appreciation of psychology, seeing its practitioners as just another type of doctor. Abuses could occur, certainly, but so could help; it was not bad in itself, only in its improper implication. Clergy had largely adopted such a view by the mid-1970s. They had few issues with psychological practice, so long as it stayed within the bounds of its expertise.⁶

Others, like Jesuits and Benedictines in the United States, endorsed a much more positive view of the discipline. Both orders had launched programs to foster connections between psychologists and religious leaders before Vatican II, establishing the Loyola National Institute of Mental Health Seminary Project and the St. John's University Institute for Mental Health.⁷ While targeting different populations (Catholic seminarians versus clergy of all faiths), the programs had a similar goal: preparing clergy to better meet the emotional needs of their congregants.⁸ These orders looked to apply psychological knowledge to other domains, as well. The Jesuits did this primarily in the field of spiritual director, or the guidance of others' spirituality. William Barry, S.J., hoped to couple spirituality with secular knowledge at the Center for Religious Development. Fuller knowledge of the self, the priest reasoned, could only benefit someone on their spiritual journey. Barry celebrated this union of the two disciplines, seeing it as a way to more fully

⁵ William F. Kraft, "Psychiatrists, Psychologists and Religious," *Review for Religious*, vo. 37, no. 2 (March 1978): 161-170

⁶ Kevin Gillespie, *Psychology and American Catholicism* (New York: Crossroad, 2001), 82, 100, 103; See also, Benjamin B. Wolman, *Psychoanalysis and Catholicism* (New York: Gardner Press, 1976)

⁷ Gillespie, *Psychology and American Catholicism*, 94

⁸ Vincent Herr, "The Loyola National Institute of Mental Health Seminary Project: A Progress Report." *American Catholic Sociological Review* 21, no. 4 (Winter, 1960): 331.

live out his religious vocation. “[He was] no longer a psychologist who happened to be a Jesuit, but a Jesuit with psychological training.”⁹ Lively dialogue on such subjects filled the pages of religious journals like the *Review for Religious* and the *American Benedictine Review*.¹⁰ These activities and publications testify to the general approval of psychology by American religious.

Some individuals took this notion of integration more seriously, even going as far as reorganizing their apostolic life to reflect psychological insights. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart in California, for example, partnered with Carl Rogers, Eugene Kennedy, and other psychologists to reform their educational institutions (fifty-one elementary schools, eight high schools, and one college). Initiated in 1967, this effort brought small sharing groups into the classroom, an adjustment championed by Rogers. Such an arrangement, the renowned therapist explained, would create a “climate of openness, risk-taking, and honesty...which enables the person...to relate more adequately and effectively to others in his everyday life situation.”¹¹ The vision was never fully realized, however. Because of such experimentation, along with other changes in community life, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart came into conflict with the local

⁹ “Rev. William A. Berry, S.J.,” New England Jesuit Oral History Program (Weston, MA: Society of Jesus of New England, 2007), accessed at <http://www.jesuitoralhistory.org/text/barry.pdf>; Gillespie, *Psychology and American Catholicism*, 150.

¹⁰ See, for example, Thomas E. Clark, S.J., “Jungian Types and Forms of Prayer,” *Review for Religious*, vol. 42, no. 5 (Sept-Oct 1983): 661-676; Carolyn Osiek, R.S.C.J., “The Spiritual Direction of ‘Thinking’ Types,” *Review for Religious*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (March/April 1985): 209-219; Robert M. Doran, S.J., “Jungian Psychology and Christian Spirituality: III,” *Review for Religious*, vol. 38, no. 6 (November 1979): 857-866

¹¹ Carl Rogers, “The Project at Immaculate Heart: An Experiment in Self-Directed Change,” *Education* 95, no. 2 (1974): 181; “Order of Nuns Here Plan to Modernize Dress and Ideas,” *Los Angeles Times*, Oct 18, 1967

Archbishop of Los Angeles. The struggle led to the eventual dissolution of their community, highlighting the potential contentiousness surrounding psychological innovation. Yet, this was not even the most extreme of psychological experiments of the 1960s.

Communities to America's north and south adopted more revolutionary reforms. Toronto witnessed the development of a psychological commune in the late 1960s. Known as Therapeutics, this collective was originally meant to offer Catholic nuns, monks, and priests a "year-round therapeutic community" in the wake of Vatican II. It expanded rapidly, however, under the direction of laywoman Lea Hindley Smith, reaching its height in the early 1970s. By this time, Therapeutics had grown to include over nine hundred members, thirty-five households, and four hundred acres of nearby farmland. At the time, the community was the largest secular commune in the Americas.¹² A similar experiment took place to the south in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Gregorio Lemercier, the prior of the Benedictine monastery of *Santa Maria de la Resurrección*, noticed an increasing prevalence of emotional problems among his monks. Wanting to get to the root of the problem, the superior put all sixty of his subordinate into psychoanalysis. He recruited secular psychoanalysts Gustavo Quevedo and Frida Zmud for the effort, hoping to "transform" the monastery into "a house of health," with a particular emphasis on acknowledging, but not acting on, forbidden sexual desire. Though popular among community members, the adventure suffered from financial and pontifical pressures. Over

¹² For more, see Grant Goodbrand, *Therapeutics The Rise and Fall of Lea Hindley-Smith's Psychoanalytic Commune* (Chicago: ECW Press, 2010) and Philip Marchand, "Open Book by Philip Marchand: The Odd History of a 1960s Catholic Psychoanalytic Commune," *National Post*, Oct 1, 2010.

half the monastery's budget went to psychological fees, forcing the brothers to trade their prayer journals for part-time jobs. The psychological practices affected not just the style of life, but even the sheer numbers living that life together. Over 2/3 of the monks ended up leaving their vocation, preferring instead to become psychoanalysts themselves. Such dramatic happenings attracted the attention of the popular press and, ultimately, the Vatican. Pontifical authorities ordered the Cuernavaca Benedictines to cease their experiment in 1961 and, with no change forthcoming, reassigned Prior Lemerrier in 1965.¹³ While such communal experiments were clearly aberrations, they spoke to the utopian longings of Catholic religious in the 1960s as well as their general attraction to psychology.

Fr. David Geraets had much smaller ambitions, at least initially. The young monk first encountered the discipline during his doctoral work in Rome, in which he examined the influence of music on religious conversion. This project, along with his study of Catechetics more generally, left the young priest with a favorable impression of psychology. He wanted to make the truth of Jesus more intelligible to modern man, and the social sciences offered just such an opportunity.¹⁴ Personal considerations, as well, seemed to have informed Geraets' growing fascination. He had experienced strange dreams for years, the Benedictine monk admitted in 1979, but had kept them absolutely

¹³ Gregorio Lemerrier, "Un Monasterio Benedictino en Psicoanalysis" in *Cuernavaca: Fuentes Para El Estudio de Una Diocesis: Documentos y Reacciones de la Presna, 1959-68*, ed. Baltazar Lopez (Cuernavaca, Mex: Centro Intercultural de Documentacion, 1968); See also, Ruben Gallo, *Freud's Mexico: Into the Wilds of Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 119-148

¹⁴ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, "Holiness Is Inner Healing and Wholeness," 1979, SCRC; David Geraets, *The Role of Music in the Missionary Catechetical Apostolate* (Benet Lake: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1968),

secret. What would his parents or superiors think? he worried. Would they label him crazy? Would they institutionalize him?¹⁵ These worries kept Geraets from sharing his visions with anyone else, at least until he met Morton Kelsey.

One imagines that these visions piqued Geraets' interest in the Charismatic Renewal. The Pentecostal Movement, after all, emphasized the prevalence and importance of personal encounters with the divine, sometimes even through dreams.¹⁶ It was through the Renewal that Geraets first came into contact with Notre Dame professor and Episcopal priest Morton Kelsey in 1972. Both attending the Loyola Charismatic Conference in Los Angeles, the two seemed to have developed an intense, personal friendship. Kelsey, a leading expert on Jungian depth psychology and dreams in particular, comforted the young priest about his dreams, reassuring him that these visions were real, and not just hallucinations. Geraets was beyond relieved. Not only was he not alone, but, most importantly, he was not crazy.¹⁷ Such affirmation made the monk eager to learn more about dreams, Kelsey, and this strange science of depth psychology.

Personal crisis had also played an important role in bringing Morton Kelsey to the study of Jungian psychology. Serving as an Episcopalian priest at a parish in Monrovia, CA in the 1950s, the cleric found himself on the “dead-end street” of ministry, physically and “intellectually burned out. He was preaching but not believing, he recalled. Such breakdowns, Kelsey explained in retrospect, were depressingly common among those who

¹⁵ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Vision Quest: Tell Your Story,” 1988, SCRC

¹⁶ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “God: Visions, Dreams & Revelations,” 2001, SCRC

¹⁷ Geraets, “Vision Quest”

had attended liberal seminaries. Their training had offered them great intellectual preparation and terrible spiritual preparation. “Among clergy,” he elaborated,

...a nervous breakdown is often a sign of sincerity and psychic integrity: it means they have a conscience and cannot live a lie. They invite hungry people to church and have nothing with which to feed them. The poor minister who has only intellectual arguments and pastoral care soon burns out. When we no longer believe the rational sermons we preach, we often fall into neurosis.¹⁸

Kelsey only found his way out of this religious conundrum, ironically enough, with the help of a secular Jewish psychoanalyst. Weekly therapy sessions, kept secret from his congregation and superiors, enabled Kelsey to take the New Testament and prayer seriously again. Such a personal conversion, a return to sanity and salvation, gave the young priest a deep appreciation of Jung, one bordering on adoration. “Jung points our attention to the depth and truth of Christianity,” he wrote reverently 1982. “Although reluctant at first, Jung went into the vineyard. The grapes he picked can be used for the wine of the Eucharist.”¹⁹ The young cleric vigorously defended the use of psychology in religious settings, noting that “classical, orthodox Christianity and secular psychology have much to offer to one another. They say many of the same things and they can help each other in avoiding errors and stupidity; they enhance each other.”²⁰ Determined not to keep such insights to himself, Kelsey became perhaps the most prominent and certainly best-published Christian Jungian in the U.S. With the help of fellow Episcopal priest and mentor John Sanford, he founded the Los Angeles Jung Club, formed a Jungian listening

¹⁸ Morton Kelsey, *Christo-Psychology* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 2-3;

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 154

²⁰ Morton T. Kelsey, *Caring: How Can We Love One Another?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), vii

clinic as part of his church, and even developed a correspondence with the revered psychologist himself.²¹

This background, however, leaves a fundamental question unanswered. What in the world was a prominent supporter of Jung doing at a Charismatic conference in 1972? What could he hope to contribute? Quite a lot, as it turns out. Using some of the assumptions of Jungian depth psychology, Kelsey had positioned himself as an apologist for the Renewal. In 1971, he wrote an evaluation of tongues for the *Review for Religious*. “Is it possible for intelligent people today to believe such a thing?” he queried his Roman Catholic audience. The Episcopalian answered his own question in the affirmative, blasting the blindness of Thomistic theology to non-rational experiences of God. Tongues, lacking any physiological cause, “call[ed] attention to the realm of the Spirit from which it comes.” “Speaking in tongues,” he argued, “may well be a new cry of protest against the rationalistic and materialistic Christianity of today.”²² Fully rational explanations of the Bible, he explained in a later interview, would never promote genuine belief. “Cut out the ESP elements from Acts and the accounts become meaningless,” he warned. “They reaffirm the validity of the New Testament narrative...[and] believing in immortality, and for taking Christian morality seriously.”²³ Kelsey’s study of Jung, rather than being an impediment, formed the crux of such a positive interpretation of tongues and

²¹ Ibid., viii; Kelsey, *Christo-Psychology*, 7; For a sampling of Kelsey’s work, see *Caring, Christo-Psychology, The Other Side of Silence*, and *Dreams: A Way to Listen to God*. John A. Sanford was another well-known colleague and mentor of Kelsey, also based in California and working with the Episcopal Church.

²² Morton T. Kelsey, “Speaking in Tongues in 1971: An Assessment of Its Meaning and Values,” *Review for Religious*, vol. 30 (1971): 245-255

²³ “Be Open, Churches Urged: ESP Has Place in Religion, Priest Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, Oct 22, 1977

other supernatural happenings. “If it can be imagined that the source of this stimulation might be what Carl Jung described as the collective unconscious...or to use theological words, the realm of the Spirit,” he reasoned, “then both tongues and dreams might be seen as a breakthrough of spiritual reality into the ordinary, humdrum human life.”²⁴ These beliefs led Kelsey to become a prominent figure and speaker within the Renewal, bringing him eventually to his fateful meeting with Geraets.

Their common interests in dreams and charismatic experience sparked a deep friendship between the two priests, one that would profoundly shape Geraets’ worldview. With this mentorship (Kelsey later became Geraets’ spiritual director) and the writings of others like John Sanford and Robert Johnson, Geraets absorbed the basic tenets of Jungian depth psychology throughout the early 1970s.²⁵ One of Jung’s most consistent teachings revolved around something known as the “shadow side,” a hated and repressed part of the self that contributed to psychological illness. People had a deep fear of their true feelings and desires, Kelsey explained. They worried about the glaring contradictions inside their own hearts, seeing desires that were “bright and beautiful and loving” coexisting with those that were “dark, questionable, destructive, and dangerous.”²⁶ If people struggled to understand such a dichotomy inside themselves, he reasoned, how could they expect love and empathy from those on the outside? “Deep in the heart of each one of us is the fear that no one can abide in the totality of our inner being: murderer, idiot and traitor,” the

²⁴ Kelsey, “Speaking in Tongues in 1971”

²⁵ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Dreams: Healing and Listening to God,” 2008, SCRC

²⁶ Kelsey, *Caring*, 47

Episcopalian explained.²⁷ This fear, along with an intense desire to be loved, led people to outright deny parts of themselves. They would ignore same-sex attractions, endure in loveless marriages, and keep in touch with abusive families, all in an attempt to preserve an idealized image of the self.

Serious dangers, however, lay in wait for those who refused to acknowledge the darkness inside. Unresolved conflict and forbidden desires stood at the heart of most psychological and even physical problems, Kelsey and Geraets maintained. “Because he was wrongly corrected,” the Abbot explained of a priest dealing with some serious personal issues, “he eventually ended leaving religious life, eventually ending up in a mental hospital and dying there. Just because he wouldn’t combat his situation.”²⁸ In this way, the personal led to the psychological, with denial of parts of the self underlying issues like schizophrenia, anxiety, depression, etc.

These rejected parts of the psyche could pose dangers not only to the self, but also to others. Unacknowledged desires made relationships with others difficult, if not impossible. Imagine the woman who freaks out when her date is fifteen minutes late. Though certainly impolite, the action is generally excusable. But not for her. Still dealing with abandonment issues from when her dad walked out on their family, she immediately links present trial with past tragedy. She yells at her date and storms out, missing out on what would otherwise have been a lovely evening. “Projections” were often the root of these irrational or disproportionate reactions, as conflict inside the self affected

²⁷ Kelsey, *Christo-Psychology*, 189

²⁸ Abbot David Geraets OSB, “Let Us Forgive and Love Each Other,” 2000, SCRC

relationships with others. Kelsey offered an example of this phenomenon from his time in spiritual direction. “When we are secure in mature self-knowledge,” the Episcopalian priest explained, “what another person says is not likely to touch on sore spots that we have not dealt with in ourselves. The more hidden, un-faced parts we have inside, the more we are likely to react to other people’s confessions in ways that will interfere with their healing.”²⁹ Geraets described the process similarly, though more simply. “In any area of your life that you don’t know your poverty, your need for the Holy Spirit, you crucify a brother or a sister,” he summarized.³⁰

Such projections could also affect one’s spiritual life. Geraets illustrated this with an example from his personal life. He had grown up in a strict household, he explained, one of fourteen children. His father, though loving, had high expectations for his family. This attitude conveyed an implicit message to Geraets and his siblings, the belief that “if I do the right things in life he will love me and if I do the wrong things of life, he won’t love me.”³¹ Such an upbringing, the Abbot believed, had shaped his understanding of God. “My earthly father image conditioned the way I prayed to God for *thirty-three* years of my life,” he explained in 1988. “I considered God to be the old man in the heavens with the record book—he was going to face me with that when I died someday. And I didn’t look forward to that with eternal longing.”³² This authoritarian image faded with Geraets’ involvement in and experiences of love and mercy through the Charismatic Renewal. “[The Baptism of

²⁹ Kelsey, *Christo-Psychology*, 93

³⁰ Geraets, “Holiness Is Inner Healing and Wholeness”

³¹ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Abiding through Contemplative Prayer,” 1979, SCRC

³² Geraets, “Vision Quest: Tell Your Story”

the Holy Spirit] changed my whole concept of religion,” he admitted later.³³ The Benedictine monk thus used personal experience to illustrate a fundamental truth: earthly projections of one’s father could affect human perceptions of the Father, which might prevent a believer from experiencing God’s love. Kelsey spoke similarly of the dangers of un-integration, as it prevented the believer from realizing the presence of God within. “Beyond the darkness of the soul lies a beauty we never dreamed existed in this mortal world... the spirit of the living Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Shekinah or glorious blaze of the father,” he wrote loftily.³⁴ Thus, both spoke to the dangers that projections held for the outer and inner journey, for how we treated others and ourselves.

One could only avoid these pitfalls through the principles of integration. Geraets spoke endlessly of “bringing it to consciousness,” acknowledging one’s faults openly and nonjudgmentally. “If you don’t deal with it, it deals with you,” he quipped characteristically during a 1981 speech on the value of honesty with oneself.³⁵ Kelsey similarly emphasized the value of wholeness. “My task is to redeem what is redeemable within the darkness and bring the whole of my being into one entire, integral human center of action and of feeling and of being,” he maintained. “Wholeness means to function as a unit rather than allowing the various parts of me to take control of me and act autonomously.”³⁶ This process of integration would diminish the threat of the shadow side, as well as the dangers of projection.

³³ Geraets, “Abiding through Contemplative Prayer”

³⁴ Kelsey, *Caring*, 84

³⁵ Abbot David Geraets, OSB., “Discernment from Dreams,” 1981, SCRC

³⁶ Kelsey, *Caring*, 47

Dreams frequently laid out one's path to wholeness. In the Jungian worldview, dreams bubbled up from the unconscious, speaking to the parts of the self that the conscious mind might have rejected.³⁷ As such, they represented the best way to get in touch with one's "shadow side" and come into psychological wholeness. "A dreamer is screaming out from within," the Abbot exclaimed with typical dramatic flair, trying to "tell you something about yourself that you should know but you don't know."³⁸ A dream was like a diagnostic test pinpointing the exact root of the illness. The only issue with this test, however, was that it was far from simple to understand. Originating in the "primitive" part of the mind, dreams often appeared to be "superficially nonsense."³⁹ What connection, many people wondered, could there possibly be between nightmares about being chased by a flock of seagulls and one's spiritual development? The unconscious mind communicated through symbols or "archetypes," Jung believed. His dream analysis, therefore, offered a framework to tease out the hidden meanings of dreams. "[These archetypes] are to your soul what your eyes and ears and nose are to your body," the Abbot detailed, helping transform raw sensation into meaningful information.⁴⁰ For this reason, dream interpretation and journaling became vitally important in the journey towards wholeness, as it provided the direction forward.

³⁷ For Jung's most accessible treatment of dreams, see Carl Jung, *Modern Man in Search of Soul* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1933), especially Chapter 1, "Dream Analysis in Its Practical Applications"

³⁸ Geraets, "Discernment from Dreams"

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Geraets and Kelsey envisioned dream work not just as an exercise in self-improvement, but rather a vital part of the spiritual journey. God was the source of nocturnal visions, they believed, a force akin to Jung's collective unconscious. Kelsey saw proof of these divine origins in the surprising accuracy and applicability of dreams to everyday life. "When we find that our dreams bring us solutions to problems that our best intelligence could not solve," he reasoned, "we often begin to take revelation and the Divine far more seriously. There are few better ways of learning to observe the hand of God in our lives than the persistent Christian practice of listening to these strange messengers of the night."⁴¹ If this was true, Geraets concluded, then such divine revelations must have a deeper purpose. "If God takes all this time to give us these movies by night, personal movies, personal symbols," he rationalized, "wouldn't be logical when I'm going to speak to God I'm going to use those same symbols in prayer back to God?" "The most important thing is that we pray the dream," he concluded. "That's why it was given to us."⁴² Kelsey and Geraets thus spiritualized not only the source of dreams, but also the practice of working with them. Dream interpretation became a vital part of one's search for holiness, and not just wholeness.

FROM DREAMS TO REALITY: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL RESTRUCTURING OF PECOS

The two priests began collaborating to make such insights a part of life at Pecos. Throughout the 1970s and 80s, Jungian teachings steadily gained prominence at the

⁴¹ Morton T. Kelsey, *God, Dreams, and Revelation: A Christian Interpretation of Dreams* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1991), 11

⁴² Abbot David Geraets, OSB, "Dreams: God Speaking to Us Today," 2003, SCRC

monastery. A collection of Kelsey's sermons, entitled *The Art of Christian Love*, became one of Dove Publications first pamphlets in 1969. Favorable reviews of Kelsey's work began appearing in the Abbey newsletter throughout the mid-1970s, along with full length editorials by the Episcopalian on topics ranging from "Praying in Images" to "Listening" and "The Little Child."⁴³ Geraets invited Kelsey, by now his spiritual director, to offer a retreat at Pecos on Christian love in the winter of 1975. The Notre Dame professor was taken by the vibrancy of the community's life together as its Abbot was with his writings. "The community at Pecos [was] trying as sincerely and consciously to express the idea of Christian love as any group of people [he knew]," the Episcopalian wrote admiringly.⁴⁴ Those at Pecos seemed to benefit from the encounter as well, implementing several aspects of Jungian psychology into monastery life.

Dreams and dream interpretation, especially, became a regular part of community life. Beyond Geraets' original founding vision, these visions by night helped guide Our Lady of Guadalupe throughout its development. An incident from 1982 most visibly spoke to the monks' confidence in dreams. The monastery's relationship with its superiors was deteriorating. The Swiss-American Benedictine Foundation was threatening to expel Pecos from its ranks, primarily over the issue of women. Though it had permitted the "double community" since 1970, the governing body felt that such an experiment could no longer continue. Those at Pecos were caught between a rock and a hard place, not wanting to be left juridically homeless yet also wanting to retain its female members, women whom

⁴³ *Pecos Benedictine*, May 1974, Feb 1975, Dec 1976

⁴⁴ Kelsey, *Caring*, vi

they considered to be an integral and indispensable part of their community. The problem was solved in miraculous fashion, through a vision delivered to Bro. Daniel Stramara. “I saw the community gathered in the chapel,” he remembered of a dream.

We were all on our knees seeking the face of the Lord in a deep atmosphere of praise and worship. We were trying to learn the Lord’s will for our community. While we were on our knees a monk appeared dressed in white. He stood in between the tabernacle and the altar in the air but removed from the wall. Various members noticed him and oohed and awed saying; ‘Who is he?’ I then replied after getting up off of my knees; ‘It is Blessed Bernard Tolomei the founder of the Olivetans who died in 1348.’At this point Blessed Bernard spoke; ‘I have come to lead you and to guide you into my flock, for I have taken pity on you in your plight. Come then, my little ones, and gather around me. I will be your father, and take care of you. Do not be afraid, come.’⁴⁵

Stramara maintained that he knew nothing of Tolomei or the Olivetans previously but, upon further research, came to see that the Olivetan Congregation did have a long history of supporting double communities. Community members took this to be a sign from the Lord, a miraculous solution to their conundrum. To preserve the women at their monastery, they joined the Olivetan Congregation shortly afterwards in 1982.⁴⁶ This instance illustrated the trust placed in dreams at the Pecos monastery.

Depth psychology became commonplace in other aspects of community apostolate. Dove Publications became known for publishing books dealing with the overlap of religion and psychology, such as *Dreams and the Bible* and *Cherishing Our Differences: Personality Types and the Church*. Endorsements of Kelsey’s work appeared frequently in the community newsletter. “This outstanding psychiatrist has done much to demonstrate

⁴⁵ Bro. Daniel Stramara, “Prophecy and Revelations,” 18 Feb 1982, Box 1, Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery Archive, Pecos, NM, 87552

⁴⁶ Ibid; Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”

that men are in contact with a realm of being which is not material, but no less real and powerful for it,” reported Jim Scully of *The Reality of the Spiritual World*.⁴⁷ At times, the community even invited Kelsey to pen guest columns for the *Pecos Benedictine* newsletter. These editorials ranged from counseling to “The Art of Christian Love,” and usually contained some notes of depth psychology within.⁴⁸ Community retreats also adopted a Jungian flavor. Dream analysis featured prominently, as did the healing of inner child. The growing popularity of Jungian psychology spoke to its growing appeal, both to those living in and visiting the monastery.

Pecos, initially, found depth psychology most helpful in its inner healing ministry. Over the years, the men and women of Pecos had become intimately familiar with the suffering and pain of others. Their retreats brought them into contact with so many people from so many different walks of life, but always with the same problems. “You see people come on a Friday night [and] it’s not too hard to read the pain and the junk, you know,” Geraets summarized in 1991.⁴⁹ Sister Miriam Randall concurred. “We get a lot of people here very broken,” she had reported four years earlier. “Many of them have had nervous breakdowns, are physically sick with cancer, psychological problems and it takes basically a religious experience to heal them. They’ve tried everything else.”⁵⁰ While those at Pecos certainly gave attention to physical ailments, they focused their efforts on the psychological variety. Geraets spoke openly to this concern. “Why I’m so interested in signs and

⁴⁷ *Pecos Benedictine*, Feb 1974

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, May, Nov 1974

⁴⁹ “Abbot David’s Retirement – Pt 1,” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated Jan 19, 2012, accessed Mar 13, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuZuBKSmsts>

⁵⁰ Ed Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism,” *The Telegraph*, 7 Dec 1987

miracles and wonders is because they give people hope,” he acknowledged. “Whenever you get a vision, you get something breaking in, you know that God is real in a way that you had not realized before. Every time God breaks in it’s a surprise and it’s better than you had anticipated.”⁵¹ This hope, he believed, could contradict depression and other mental issues, leading to personal healing.

Indeed, these beliefs were shared not just by those at Pecos but those in all facets of the Charismatic Renewal. Known as “inner healing,” this practice focused on healing inner ailments like anxiety, depression, etc. People developed these problems naturally, inner healing proponents believed, primarily due to a lack of love. “I never met a person who had all the love that they needed in proper proportion on a daily basis,” Fr. Robert DeGrandis maintained.⁵² Fr. Francis MacNutt adopted a slightly different emphasis, seeing humanity’s brokenness as a logical consequence of original sin. Each of us had a longing for the infinite affection of God, he believed, which led to infinite dissatisfaction with what was available. “We’re not fully the human beings we should be. We’re not fully able to love other people because we’ve been hurt,” he explained.”⁵³ These inner hurts lay at the roots of all psychological problems. “There is no such thing, strictly speaking, as a homosexual (or a lesbian),” argued writer Leanne Payne. “There is only a person (an awesome thing to be), created in the image of God, who is cut off from some valid part of

⁵¹ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “God: Visions, Dreams & Revelations,” 2001, SCRC

⁵² Fr. Robert DeGrandis, S.S.J., *Layperson’s Manual for the Healing Ministry* (Privately Published, 1984), 64

⁵³ Quoted in Chordas & Gross, *The Healing of Memories: Psychotherapeutic Ritual among Catholic Pentecostals*”

himself.”⁵⁴ This lack of love was at the root of even physical ailments. “I have seen people shuffle into the psychiatric clinic with long lists of physical symptoms which evaporate one by one as [people] begin to forgive their parents,” reported Matthew and Dennis Linn, S.J., in their book *The Healing of Memories*.⁵⁵ All of these approaches emphasized the harm of separation from God, as well as the healing that came about because of reunification.

Proponents of inner healing believed in a merciful God, one who wanted to spare his children pain. “I was never able to accept the fact that psychological sickness was God’s will for a suffering individual,” Fr. MacNutt maintained. All too often, he explained, “it was destructive, not redemptive.”⁵⁶ The process of healing worked like a tidal wave, explained the Catholic evangelist, washing over all obstacles and filling in all holes. “Jesus,” he explained, “can take the memories of our past and heal them of the wounds that still remain and affect our present lives; filling with his love all these places in us that have been empty for so long, once they have been healed and drained of the poison of past hurts and resentments.”⁵⁷ Sister Miriam Randall of Pecos spoke similarly of this healing power. “[People] touch into relationship with the Lord and with the saints and that relationship gives them life and meaning,” she related. “They perk up and go out to go on with life with hope and deeper faith and greater love.”⁵⁸ The Abbot Geraets also explicitly linked

⁵⁴ Leanne Payne, *The Healing of the Homosexual* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1985), 1

⁵⁵ Matthew and Dennis Linn, S.J., *Healing Life’s Hurts: Healing Memories through Five Stages of Forgiveness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 2

⁵⁶ Fr. Francis MacNutt, “The Inner Healing of Our Emotional Problems,” *New Covenant*, May 1974: 3-6

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ “Abbot David’s Retirement – Pt 1”

this knowledge of God's love with healing. "That's my vocation as a priest and everything else," the Abbot explained in a televised interview in 1986, "I'm very interested in helping people, in seeing them healed and whole...bringing God vividly present to people."⁵⁹

Such divine love did not always materialize, however. Those involved in inner healing wrote a great deal about the quasi-psychological concept of blocks. If one could not experience the power of God's love and healing, the reasoning went, then something must be holding the person back from the experience. "The Holy Spirit is sheer, unadulterated power, a flow of compassionate energy," inner healing pioneer Agnes Sanford believed, and that "when the power begins to grow dim in us, it is because we have not kept open channels for the power to flow in."⁶⁰ Pecos community member Jim Scully likewise worried about impediments to the Spirit. "Through the Holy Spirit then, we are the channels of Jesus' saving love to all our brothers and sisters," he declared. "Our job is to let it flow, to keep removing the debris that clog the channel so that the Christ who lives in us can reach out and save and heal and enlighten others."⁶¹ The task of the believer, just as with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, was to get out of the way and let God work.

Kelsey and Geraets elaborated on the ways in which past sins or mental states could block the healing love of God. Judgement of others was one of the biggest issue for Christians, Geraets explained, particularly for those earnestly seeking holiness. "Is it possible," he queried an audience, "that our failure to forgive and be reconciled can lead

⁵⁹ "Abbot David's Retirement – Pt 1," Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O'Donnell, last updated Jan 19, 2012, accessed Mar 13, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuZuBKSmsts>

⁶⁰ Agnes Sanford, "Seeking Earnestly the Best Gifts," *New Covenant* (Nov 1973): 5-7

⁶¹ "Pentecostal Love," *Pecos Benedictine*, March 1974

us into a hardness of heart, isolation, and unfruitfulness for God's kingdom?"⁶² Kelsey elaborated on the effects of self-condemnation, as well. Many people "[were] suffering not because they fail to judge themselves," the Episcopalian declared. "Rather, they judge themselves so severely that they cut themselves off from the love of God."⁶³ Such a fear of self-rejection ran through all of Jungian psychology, even apparent in the writing of the master himself. After discussing the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jung wondered what would happen if each of us were to look upon ourselves with such care and charity.

What if I should discover that the least amongst them all, the poorest of the beggars, the most impudent of the offenders, the very enemy himself—that these are within me, and that I myself stand in need of the aims of my own kindness—that I myself am the enemy who must be loved...Had it been God himself who drew near to us in this despicable form, we should have denied him a thousand times before a single cock had crowed.⁶⁴

In this way, the rejection of the self could lead to a rejection of God's love, rendering a believer unable to receive healing.

Geraets and his fellow monks believed that depth psychology could augment this healing process. Through practices such as journaling, dream-analysis, and active imagination that encouraged self-awareness, one sister explained, the community helped identify issues cutting a believer off from God's love. "Here, we isolate someone's fears that operate on his present life, and ask him or her to visualize each detail from the past that causes this problem," she detailed. "Then we encourage that person to imagine that

⁶² Geraets, "Let Us Forgive and Love Each Other"

⁶³ Kelsey, *Caring*, 95

⁶⁴ Jung, *Modern Man in Search of Soul*, 241

Jesus is with him or her when that episode was taking place.”⁶⁵ Sister Jeanne Hill elaborated on this process of identification. “Where do our fears of intimacy with God originate?” she asked rhetorically, proceeding to answer her own question.

Primarily they emanate from this false self based on fear and acting out of a value system which it feels will protect it. At the root of most of our personalities is a fear of rejection and annihilation which the Lord must gently shift to a foundation of true love for ourselves in Jesus Christ. Through grace offered in the process we call inner healing, in whatever form it is received, perfect love flowing from the Holy Spirit enters the wounded and empty places in our soul, bringing wholesome life, freeing us to love ourselves, to receive and give love in healthy inter-relationships.⁶⁶

In this way, the Pecos religious promoted depth psychology as a tool for self-knowledge, which could help pinpoint obstacles and open believers up more fully to the love of God.

Though one dealt with the psyche and the other the soul, depth psychology and inner healing were not as separate as they appeared. The two disciplines spoke of similar phenomena, simply in different terms. What was the difference, really, between blocks and projections? Both originated from a false relationship to the self and both kept a believer from God’s love. Geraets’ relationship with his father, for example, would fit in either category. Dreams played a similar role within each practice, as well. Leanne Payne spoke eloquently of the power of dreams in her works *The Healing of the Homosexual* and *The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer*. These nightly visions, she explained, often put people back in touch with the parts of themselves from which they had become estranged. “What is in our hearts can thereby be revealed to our

⁶⁵ Charles A. Fracchia, *Living Together Alone: The New American Monasticism* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 120-137

⁶⁶ Jeanne Hill, “Con-templing with God: Healing the Fear,” in *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, edited by Paul Hinnebusch, (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 67-75

conscious minds. What is from the heart of God can via the dream be made known to our hearts and heads,” Payne detailed. The inner healing advocate also acknowledged the difficulty interpreting such messages. Dreams were spoken in the language of the heart, requiring the ability to think symbolically. Though Payne explicitly cautioned against using Jungian or Freudian thought to make sense of their dreams, her basic understanding of the process was almost identical to that of Kelsey and Geraets.⁶⁷ These ideas illustrate some of the overlap between depth psychology and inner healing. On most aspects of the inner life, they seemed to differ predominantly in language, not substance.

These avenues of healing, after all, came not just out of the same desire to help people, but even the same family. Morton Kelsey, though probably the most well-known proponent of Christian Jungianism, was not the first. Kelsey had learned under the direction of fellow Episcopal priest John A. Sanford, an author known for books such as *Dreams: God’s Forgotten Language* and *Jesus, Paul, and Depth Psychology*. Together, in fact, the two priests had formed the Los Angeles Jung Club. This John Sanford, however, was none other than the son of inner healing pioneer Agnes Sanford.⁶⁸ Sanford, an Episcopal laywoman, was a major force behind the inner healing movement, both through her own work like *The Healing Light* and also through the work of her disciples like Fr. Francis MacNutt. While the thought of mother may not be identical to that of her son, the connection is intriguing, suggesting that the connections between depth psychology and inner healing might be more than a coincidence.

⁶⁷ Leanne Payne, *The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1981), 176-179

⁶⁸ Interview with Marie Discullio-Naples, 8 Dec 2015

Pecos expanded upon these thought systems with its own emphasis on religious community. The people around, and not just the dreams inside, could help believers better identify their own blocks and shortcomings. “You need a community around to bring out the various facets of your personality and to kind of rub you and purify you,” the Abbot explained. “[They help] knock off the sharp edges.”⁶⁹ This process of “corporate crucifixion” was necessary for psychological wholeness, as seen through the example of Jesus.⁷⁰ The Son of God had sent his disciples away two-by-two, the Benedictine superior noted, not one-by-one. He cautioned his listeners to “be careful of the prophet no one can live with,” explaining that “there [was] just too much illusion in going off by yourself.”⁷¹ These illusions could have spiritual, as well as personal, consequences. Geraets based this idea largely on 1 John 4:20, “If any one says, ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.”⁷² Geraets linked this verse to the teachings of depth psychology, arguing that “your psyche does not relate to God one way and humans another.” “If you want to know the quality of your prayer life, how much you love the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,” he queried, “how much do you love your wife, your husband, your brother, your sister?”⁷³ Earthly relationships thus prefigured eternal realities. The Charismatic Benedictine reiterated this point again and again in his speaking career. “Would you think it possible to live with the people you’re presently living with for all eternity?,” he questioned an

⁶⁹ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Discernment of Paranormal Experiences,” 1981, SCRC

⁷⁰ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Baptism into Suffering and Shekinah Glory,” 1993, SCRC

⁷¹ Geraets, “Discernment of Paranormal Experiences”

⁷² 1 John 4:20

⁷³ “Discernment of Paranormal Experiences”

audience in 1981, “because that’s the only kind of heaven there is. There ain’t no other.”⁷⁴ Yet, even as they prepared believers for eternity, these relationships healed their problems here on earth. Frequent Pecos visitor Lorna Green explained the link between this purification and inner healing. “Essentially, very insignificant events in a loving community would open the old wounds and painful memories—senses of rejection, separations, early hurts and anger,” she believed. “The process was one of taking off bandages. Each of us was like Lazarus, called forth from the tomb, and now others undid the wraps.”⁷⁵ Thus, community became essential to life at Pecos, not only for one’s personal development, but also for religious sanctification and inner healing.

A similar logic undergirded Pecos’ inclusion of women into the monastic community. Geraets vehemently disagreed with the strict division of male and female foundations. He felt this way primarily because of his study of depth psychology, particularly concepts like the “shadow side” and “animus/anima.” Geraets and his mentor Kelsey remained wary of any sort of separation, particularly one related so deeply to physical desires. “There is certainly no better way to become neurotic than to try and become pure spirit,” explained the Episcopalian priest in one of his many books. “This denies the goodness of God’s creation....when I deny a portion of God’s creation within me, I create havoc and pain.”⁷⁶ As Kelsey’s argument suggests, such outer segregation had interior consequences. Men and women needed each other to be able to acknowledge all

⁷⁴ Geraets, “Discerning Visions and Revelations,”

⁷⁵ Lorna Green, *Earth Age: A New Vision of God, the Human, and the Earth* (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 142

⁷⁶ Kelsey, *Christo-Psychology*, 54

parts of the self. Men had a male spirit (*animus*) and women had a female one (*anima*); wholeness depended on men getting in touch with their *anima* and women with their *animus*, so as to round out their personalities. To live in all male or all female enclosures, in the Jungian mind, was denying part of the self and risking the wrath of the shadow.

Such a process was also important for one's spiritual life. If one was open to the currents of femininity and masculinity running through oneself, Fr. Ray Roh reasoned, then one would also be open to the work of the Spirit. "More than any other interpersonal factor in the community," he believed, "the masculine-feminine encounter force[d] members to confront their own shadow and allow[ed] the Spirit to bring forth a better inner harmony or balance."⁷⁷ Geraets defended the arrangement similarly. "The relationships between men and women may be the best way to open up to God," he explained, because it allowed people to get used to wisdom and loving coming from a source outside the self.⁷⁸ In this way, men and women living together intensified the dynamics of community life, the process of coming to terms with all of one's personality.

Other aspects of life at Pecos reflected this concern for wholeness and integration. The community devoted a surprising amount of attention to diet and exercise. "More and more," Geraets wrote in the introduction to a community-produced cookbook, "we are coming to see that proper care of our bodies is a spiritual responsibility." Those at Pecos lived out this obligation, he explained, by preparing "wholesome, undoctored

⁷⁷ "A New Star: A Short History of the Abbey of Our Lady of Guadalupe Pecos, New Mexico," 1973, Box 62, Folder 2, Religious Orders Printed Material, UNDA

⁷⁸ Sam Atwood, "Spiritual Pioneers: Men and Women Share Charismatic Monastic Life," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 15, 1986

ingredients...in simple but tasty ways.”⁷⁹ Indeed, diet became a point of emphasis within community life, particularly after Geraets’ diagnosis with diabetes in the early 1980s. The kitchen made meals with whole-wheat flour, soy or low-fat milk, and vegetables and largely eliminated butter, mayonnaise, and other high-fat foods. Body care involved more than just diet, however, as Pecos implemented a community exercise program of aerobics and weight-lifting sometime before 1983. Geraets, especially, made this a community priority. Every so often, monk Fr. Robert Lussier recalled with chagrin, the Abbot would ship individual community members off to a fitness boot camp for a couple weeks.⁸⁰ In this way, those at Pecos came to see physical health as an important part of spiritual holiness. Geraets openly disparaged the “strict dichotomy between body and spirit.” “Improper eating, as well as lack of proper physical exercise, is very probably sinful,” the Abbot declared. “The commandment, ‘Thou shalt not kill,’ applies even to one’s own body. Whether through a single violent act, or gradually through improper eating, the commandment is still broken.”⁸¹

Other Pecos practices targeted the body, most clearly seen through the community’s style of worship. Abbot Geraets and several others at Pecos were huge proponents of liturgical dance, a performance thought to complement and enhance traditional rituals like the Mass. “The body should be in movement,” Geraets stated matter-of-factly, arguing

⁷⁹ *Pecos Benedictine*, Aug 1985; Brother Nicholas Schaefer, O.S.B., *Cooking Pure & Simple* (Pecos, NM: Dove Publications, 1985)

⁸⁰ Alan McAskill. “Monasticism in a Changing World,” Masters Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1995, 79-82; “A New Star”; Interview with Fr. Robert Lussier 17 Nov 2015; *Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1983; Sr. Anne Cic. and Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Holistic Health,” 8 Aug 1982, talk given at the Pecos School for Spiritual Directors, Pecos, NM

⁸¹ Schaefer, *Cooking Pure and Simple*, forward

that “we come into the depths of contemplative prayer by movement. In the dancing, there is the stillness,” he concluded. The Abbot justified such a claim with appeals to Jungian thought. Physical movement, he claimed, actually helped “sensate” personality types become more engaged with prayer rituals; too often prayer activities were designed for “thinking” participants.⁸² Physicality was also a property of the earthier, more “primitive” religions, those thought to be more authentic, spiritual, and closer to the collective unconscious in Jungian dogma. Italians and Spaniards, Geraets noted, were always laying on their hands or celebrating festivals with dancing and music, a stark contrast from normally staid English and North American congregations.⁸³ Finally, dancing represented one of the best ways to get in touch with one’s “inner child,” one’s interior place of innocence and trust. “That little child needs to get up and dance and praise God to be fully alive, in order that you as an adult are fully alive,” the Benedictine superior maintained.⁸⁴ Such understandings of dance, movement, and physicality became part of life at Pecos. Liturgical dancing helped the community celebrate God’s benevolence, whether at a weekly Reconciliation service or the monastery’s 2001 reunion; the laying-on of hands became a frequent occurrence at nightly prayer.⁸⁵ These and similar practices attempted to better involve the body in worship.

⁸² The whole idea of the Myer-Briggs Personality Types, upon which this point is made, comes from Jung’s writings regarding the different types of individual people.

⁸³ Geraets, “Abiding through Contemplative Prayer”

⁸⁴ Ibid; Geraets, “Holiness is Inner Healing and Wholeness”

⁸⁵ *Pecos Benedictine*, Aug 1979; Pecos Benedictine Abbey, *Help Us to Dream: A Pictorial Album Celebrating Reunion 2001 with the Monks and Sisters of Our Lady of Guadalupe Olivetan Benedictine Congregation* (Sulphur, LA: Wise, 2001),

These initiatives, whether related to depth psychology or inner healing, proper diet or dancing, played into a broader preoccupation with wholeness. “Jesus must be Lord of all,” Fr. Ray Roh explained in 1984, “Lord of our past, present, future; our conscious and unconscious; Lord of body, soul, spirit, Lord of *all* our relationships; Lord of our community.”⁸⁶ Those at Pecos viewed every part of life at their monastery as part of the quest for integration. “I don’t think you can afford, in our day, a divorce between the religious, the psychological and the physical,” the Abbot argued. “We’re as interested in the body and diet and exercise as we are in the psyche, the development of knowledge and study and relationships on that level, as with the prayer life, the spiritual dimension, the God consciousness that transforms and animates a life.”⁸⁷ The consequences of not “minister[ing] to the whole person,” he noted wearily, were dire. The Abbot recounted the story of a Pentecostal community in Zion, Illinois with evident horror. Because they trusted in the Lord above all else, Pentecostal parents had refused to send their children to the doctor or the dentist. God alone, they believed, could heal them; to God alone they went for healing. Such a decision not only led to an epidemic of preventable illness and tooth decay, but also a loss of religious faith. “Many of their children would have nothing to do with the Charismatic Renewal or Pentecostalism,” Geraets shuddered, so scarred were they by its denial of modern medicine.⁸⁸ An understanding of the secular sciences, therefore, would help take away potential obstacles to the faith. Such practical benefits,

⁸⁶ “A New Star”

⁸⁷ Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”

⁸⁸ Geraets, “Holiness is Inner Healing and Wholeness”

whether in inner healing or Charismatic experience, made depth psychology particularly useful to the monks of Pecos and a particularly important aspect of their ministry.

It was not only attraction from the inside that drew Our Lady of Guadalupe towards psychological process, however. Fear also played a contributing role, particularly in the wake of the Jonestown tragedy in 1978. A mass suicide of over nine hundred members of the Peoples Temple in Guyana, this event drove home the potential dangers of Pentecostal theology and charismatic (with a little “c”) leadership.⁸⁹ Questions had already been circulating in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal about the dangers of emotional faith and personal inspiration, but this event gave such questions a particular urgency.

Two magazine articles authored by Geraets illustrated this changing emphasis within the Renewal. The first, published in 1977, spoke of the importance of Charismatic experience in Christian life. Young people, the Abbot explained, were not as lost as they might seem from the outside. Though plunging themselves into New-Age meditation, psychedelic drug use, and hippie communes, they were “honestly searching for the transcendent, even though they may have been deceived in their methods.” “They are seeking God,” he reiterated. “Since they fail to find Him in their familiar Christian structures, they drift into current fads.” Geraets blamed this state of affairs not the youth or the temptations leading them astray, but rather on the Church itself. “If [young people] want to learn about the praise of God,” the Abbot noted, “they are more likely to hear about it through a group of Hari Krishna devotees than in the Sunday morning sermon.” Without

⁸⁹ For more information, see David Chidester, *Salvation and Suicide: An Interpretation of Jim Jones, the People's Temple, and Jonestown* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana U. Press, 1988)

the experience of a “deeply realized Presence,” Christianity was little more than a mixture of “duty, social pressure, guilt, or fear of sin and condemnation.”⁹⁰ Geraets concluded the article optimistically, explaining that such developments challenged Christians to pay new attention to spiritual experiences and the Charismatic gifts in particular.

After the Jonestown tragedy, however, a new emphasis appeared in Geraets’ writing. The article dealt with spiritual seekers, but this time focused on the response of the individual, not of the Church. “Cults abound!” he warned his readers, noting the increased number of self-proclaimed messiahs and gurus. These groups were especially harmful, he explained, because of their naïve beliefs about the spiritual world. They promoted séances and drug trips, hoping to escape the physical world and trusting in the goodness of the world beyond. Yet, the Benedictine warned,

the spiritual world in itself is no better than the material world. To think so is sheer gnostic deception. There are devils in the spiritual realm as well as the Holy Spirit, angels and saints. One is no better off for having opened him/herself to the spiritual world as an end in itself than communists or capitalists are when they are completely occupied with the material universe.

No shortcuts existed to spiritual maturity, the Abbot continued, though the *easiest* way certainly was through loving relationship with Christ. Geraets offered believers four suggestions to make sure that they hewed close to the path of holiness. “Guard your heart,” he urged first, noting the dangers of improper motivation. “To enter the spiritual world for reasons of gathering power, wealth or prestige is sure to bring disaster...is an excellent way to plunge oneself right into Satanic dominion.” The starting was not the only issue,

⁹⁰ David Geraets, “A School for Charismatic Spiritual Directors,” *Catholic Charismatic*, vol. 3, no. 3 (Aug/Sept 1978)

but also the ending point. “Guard your head,” he cautioned each believer, making sure that Jesus was the target of a spiritual search. Beyond direction, Geraets advised Christians to employ the right technique. He particularly recommended the Jesus prayer, explaining that “merely repeating the name of Jesus, over and over, is enough to turn most people on and simultaneously tune them in.” Finally, it was important to share the process with another. Mature Christians could give newcomers outside perspective on their journey, as well as personal experience. To conclude, Geraets offered one last piece of advice to his readers. “I think it is always best to be explicitly Christocentric when moving from head into heart, or into the spiritual world.”⁹¹ Jesus needed to remain at the center, primarily to protect Christians from being misled on the spiritual journey.

These words spoke to the other benefit of depth psychology, Charismatic discernment. Discernment, or the ability to discern the true path of Christianity, had become particularly important in light of Charismatic practice. When one was opening oneself up to paranormal experiences, Geraets reasoned, one needed to be careful and circumspect. Personal experience could not always be trusted, such as in the case of hallucinations. Seeing pink elephants dancing through a room did not mean that they were there in reality. If people could confuse the difference between psychological and physical phenomena, the Abbot detailed, what was to stop them from mixing up the psychological and spiritual? Was the voice “telling” them to move to Alaska the word of God, or just the neglected sense of the shadow? Such questions became all the more relevant and terrifying

⁹¹ David Geraets, “Some Guidelines for the Spiritual Journey,” *Catholic Charismatic*, vol. 4, no. 3 (Aug/Sept 1979): 26-30

in the wake of Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple in 1978. Such a thing could really happen, those at Pecos saw, and needed to be fought against.⁹² “If you have people who are having visions and are hearing voices,” the Abbot summarized in 1987, “you better have some discernment to know what is true and what is, say schizophrenic, and what is hallucination; some way to critique your religious experience.”⁹³ Paying attention to one’s dreams, keeping a prayer journal, and maintaining a healthy relationship with a community thus became part of not only the healthy personal life, but also a healthy spiritual one.

The discernment of spirits involved more than just depth psychology. “We must test all things,” the Benedictine superior warned in a 1981 talk on “The Discernment of Paranormal Experiences.” Any private revelation or vision needed to have several qualities to be taken seriously. First, it had to agree with the Bible and the Church. Anything that openly contradicted the Word of God could not be from God. Second, it needed to be consonant with one’s state in life. The Spirit, for example, would not call a married man to the celibate priesthood or foreign missions; his duty was with his family. Third, revelation needed to be evaluated by those outside the self. Conversations with a devoted community and an experienced spiritual director, Geraets reasoned, would offer an outside perspective on internal perceptions, preventing the ever-present danger of self-delusion. Finally, the personal revelation needed to follow the Thomistic principle. Grace, the Abbot explained, always built on nature. Someone called to be a missionary in a foreign land, for example, would need to have language skills, a desire to go, a suitable location, and the

⁹² Geraets, “Discerning Visions and Revelations”

⁹³ Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”

strength to live long-term in another culture. There needed to be an open door to where one was going and a closed door where one was leaving, he summarized.⁹⁴ These guidelines, in addition to a grounding in depth psychology, would help the believer safely trod the path of his/her individual journey.

The monastics of Our Lady of Guadalupe integrated these principles of discernment and inner healing into its famed School for Spiritual Directors. Begun in 1977 under the direction of the Abbey and Morton Kelsey, the month-long program aimed to train amateur spiritual directors in Charismatic spirituality, Biblical scholarship, and, of course, depth psychology. Spiritual direction was “a real need in the Church today,” explained the Abbot in a 1986 interview, especially for newly-minted Charismatics. All too often, they went home to their regular friends and regular priests, people who just did not understand the spiritual realities they had experienced. Professional guidance, in summary, was lacking. Geraets promoted the School for Spiritual Directors, therefore, to rapidly offer “on-the-job” training to those who were already giving advice. He hoped to equip secretaries, receptionists, and school teachers with the spiritual experience to guide fellow Charismatics.⁹⁵

The academic curriculum of the school revolved around Charismatic spirituality, depth psychology, and Church tradition. All participants were required to be baptized in the Spirit and interested in learning more about the Renewal. Depth psychology had a

⁹⁴ Geraets, “Discernment of Paranormal Experiences”

⁹⁵ “Mother Angelica & Abbot David Geraets, OSB on EWTN,” Benedictines Youtube Channel by Bill O’Donnell, last updated 27 Oct 2011, accessed 13 Mar 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAIN45izBCY&list=PL443B4AB73CA592FC>; Geraets, “A School for Charismatic Spiritual Directors”

major place in the curriculum, as well. As the Reverend Robert Fox explained, “Under [Geraets’] direction you write a daily journal, record your dreams, get in touch with your shadow side; you recite the Jesus prayer, practice recollection, and present yourself for direction and healing.”⁹⁶ A sampling of talks from the 1983 session illustrate this emphasis on Jungian psychology. Around a third of the presentations dealt with expressly psychological concepts, ranging from “Jung and Theresa of Avila” to “Healing Parental Relationships,” “Healing through Creative Arts,” and “Making Friends with Your Shadow.” More traditional aspects of the Catholic faith rounded out the program. The School strove to teach its participants something about Scripture, the Church Fathers, and the writings of mystics like St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila. This grounding in Christian tradition was necessary, Geraets believed, to help directors be able to discern according to the Church, and not just individual experience.⁹⁷

The Abbey sought to teach these concepts both through academic lessons and community living. As formerly mentioned, aspiring spiritual directors came to live at the Pecos monastery for approximately one month. Such a prolonged stay was necessary, Geraets argued, because prayer was “not taught, but caught [in a loving community].” After all, he noted, the paralytic in Mark’s Gospel did not reach Jesus by himself, but through the efforts of his friends.⁹⁸ “The formation of people into a community,” Geraets later explained of the structure of the School, “is the best way to do everything Christian,

⁹⁶ *Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1976

⁹⁷ “Schedule of Talks and Other Events, June 5-July 2, 1983,” School for Spiritual Directors, Pecos Benedictine Abbey, New Mexico

⁹⁸ “Mother Angelica & Abbot David Geraets, OSB on EWTN”

including the training of charismatic spiritual directors.”⁹⁹ Community thus provided an experiential, in addition to academic, element to the training. It also allowed participants a chance to spend time within the male-female dynamic of the monastery, getting comfortable with the other sex and the other half of themselves. Directors got to experience Pecos’ holistic lifestyle, as well. Participants were encouraged to join in the monastic diet and exercise routine, again showing the Pecos emphasis on experience.¹⁰⁰

Participants evaluated the School quite favorably. Though obviously selected for their positivity, testimonials in the *Pecos Benedictine* newsletter offer an insight into the most visceral of reactions. “Just what *is* Pecos that it has such a diverse yet profound influence on all who come seeking—seeking in many instances without actually knowing what—of Whom? My answer is not original but I was privileged to hear the different parts—one at a time from a different person,” wrote participant Alicia Sherwood admiringly. “Pecos is not a place, not an attitude,” she concluded. “Pecos is the presence of Jesus, and it is Jesus that I take with me as I leave.” Karen Wilhelmy of the Holy Cross Sisters offered a similar evaluation. “I have never experienced the power of His healing as I have here because I have never witnessed that power so forcefully at work,” she admitted of her time spent at Pecos.¹⁰¹ Richard Snooks wrote likewise of his experience in the School in July 1979. “I have never felt so close to God, so much of His Presence in me as I do now at the close of this school,” he maintained. “This is due to the general atmosphere of and in the Monastery...in particular the loving community members in whom I surely

⁹⁹ *Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1977

¹⁰⁰ Schaefer, *Cooking Pure and Simple*; Cic & Geraets, “Holistic Health”

¹⁰¹ *Pecos Benedictine*, Sept 1976

do see Jesus.”¹⁰² Such remembrances speak to the personal value of the School amongst participants.

The community venture had a broader value, as well. These summer sessions, in addition to the rest of the monastery’s retreats and Geraets’ talks, all aimed to promote a certain vision of the Charismatic Renewal. When confronted with the dangers of Charismatic spiritual experience, Pecos chose to emphasize the value of individual discernment. Through the promotion of inner healing and depth psychology, they hoped to equip laypeople to evaluate their own path forward in the Renewal, one free from the spiritual snares that had led so many to their demise at Jonestown. The emphasis on holistic spirituality and male-female relationships served a similar purpose. Though grounded in community, these activities were meant to make people conscious of their own individual tendencies and shortcomings, so that they would be able to properly and wisely go about their own spiritual journey. Indeed, such a vision reinforced Pecos’ vision of the temporary monastic vocation. They were never preparing people to stay in community forever, but simply for a short time. The experiences at Pecos were meant to be training for the rest of one’s life. This was the dream promoted by Geraets and his fellows at Pecos: a trust in individual discernment. It would contrast sharply, however, with the vision of other, more influential groups within the Charismatic Renewal.

¹⁰² Ibid., July 1979

CHAPTER 6: “BUILDING A BULWARK”: *THE STRUCTURING OF CHARISMATIC COVENANT COMMUNITIES*

While the tragedy of True House led Rick Casey of the *National Catholic Reporter* to question the structure of covenant communities and their influence in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, it had the opposite effect on layman Kevin Ranaghan. The leader of the People of Praise in South Bend, IN, Ranaghan penned rebuttal to Casey’s expose in the pages of the *NCR*. The Charismatic figure questioned Casey’s characterization of the Renewal. Was it really fundamentalist, he asked, to take the words of Jesus seriously enough to live by them? Was it anti-intellectual to privilege one’s personal prayer and relationship with Christ over needless academic criticism? Was it sexist to advocate for the proper respect and positions of men and women in modern society?

Though Ranaghan disagreed with such portrayals, he took particular issue with Casey’s treatment of authority within the Renewal. “It’s not that Casey’s facts as isolated facts are wrong,” he explained of the reporter’s tone.

It’s the way he’s woven them together, the overall impression that he gives that disappoints me. Somehow these articles give the impression that the National Service Committee, Charismatic Renewal Services, and covenant communities are the creation of a power hungry, semifascist, male chauvinist clique, manipulating huge sums of money to their own devious yet simple-minded ends.

This misperception, Ranaghan maintained, arose from the secular and outside context in which observers were viewing covenant communities and the Charismatic Renewal as a whole. Those in charge were servants, not schemers. “Love here is seen as the commitment to lay down one’s life in service of brothers and sisters,” he explained of the work of community coordinators, “a determination to place one’s natural abilities...at the

disposal of others for their benefit.” Such dedication, along with such loving authority, was necessary for the survival of Christians in the world today. “What covenant communities are learning about these issues within the environment of genuine brotherly love,” he warned, “is of extreme importance to the survival of the church as the effective sacrament of Christ in an increasingly hostile world tottering on the brink of social, moral, political, and economic disaster.” Ranaghan even went as far to cast this renewed appreciation of authority and community as the secondary mission of the Charismatic Renewal. “Just as we have had something prophetic to say...about the fundamentals of life in Christ and the Spirit,” he argued, “we now have something prophetic to say...about God’s plan for order, authority, relationship and love among his people.”¹

Such a statement, especially in the wake of the abuses of True House, spoke to the growing appreciation of authority within the Renewal. Covenant groups, justifying this state of affairs through appeals to the Spirit and to community, promoted rigid hierarchy, unquestioning obedience, and collective discernment. Unlike Pecos, these lay Charismatics were not preparing for the life outside the community, only life within it.

“GOD IS BRINGING THE WORLD TO ITS KNEES”: THE GROWING PESSIMISM OF COVENANT COMMUNITIES

The 1970s had witnessed a growing sense of persecution and panic within the Word of God and People of Praise. Prophecies, instead of pledging God’s love and support, instead promised times of trial and tribulations. “Expectation of the Second Coming is made explicit,” noted one academic observer, often with the implication that it was coming

¹ “Charismatics: Ranaghan Replies,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 17 Oct 1975

violently.² The famous “bulwark” prophecy seemed to set the tone of what was to come. Carlos Mantica, leader of a Nicaraguan³ covenant community, recalled the fateful words, as well as its effect upon the WOG and associated communities. “Sorrow upon sorrow, agony, terror, and sickness of heart will be your companions in the days ahead,” it declared, continuing even more apocalyptically,

The storm is rising, the clouds gather, lightening, wind, and storm great enough to carry off even the strong, ready to break upon the slumbering, the unprepared, the confused. Where now is the shelter? Where the bulwark, the refuge? Where is the strength of my church when the storm is upon it? Unprepared, divided, and confused, weak when strength is most needed, it will crumble. The earth will be littered with the debris, the testimony that it was ready.

Weep for those who rush to find shelter within her when the day comes. Pray for those who trust in her defenses in that day when she is found unable to defend herself. Unless you take pains now to hear my word, to follow my leading, to carry out my will, there will be no defense. If you heed me, if you believe my word and trust in it to the limit of your strength and the end of your faith, and carry it out with the help of my grace, a bulwark will be ready. And when the collapse comes, and the walls long crumbling are washed away, yet there will be an army, a wall of defense to preserve my church.

I have said to you before and I say to you again, that I alone have wisdom, insight, knowledge, and vision sufficient for the combat that lies ahead – the combat which should have begun generations ago and did not. If you seek to plan your own plans, you will be crushed in defeat, and find no consolation in me. If you trust to my plans, and carry them out though they seem foolish, you will find your right hand strong, invincible, trained to the task and upheld by the power of heaven?

Do you understand? The day is close upon you. I do not speak always in riddles; and when I speak to you in plain speech, receive it as plain speech.⁴

² Scorsone, “Authority, Conflict, and Integration: The Catholic Charismatics Renewal Movement and the Roman Catholic Church,” 62-68

³ The story of the Charismatic Renewal in other countries is, by and large, a story yet to be written.

⁴ Carlos Mantica, “Building a Bulwark,” *Living Bulwark*, vol. 60 (May 2012), accessed at <http://www.swordofthespirit.net/bulwark/may2012p1.htm>

Carrying the weight of divine authority, these prophecies illustrated and increased the current of fear and anxiety running through the WOG and POP in the mid-1970s. Such emotions would, in time, have dramatic consequences not only on the psyches of these communities, but also their structures.

Why might these prophecies have arisen at this particular time in the history of these communities? Economic and social circumstances may have played a role. The Midwestern “Rustbelt,” after all, was particularly hard hit by the 1970s. Deindustrialization and out-migration stripped the region of its economic and political power, as companies and employees flocked to the temperate Sunbelt. These processes prompted changes affecting not just those working in the factories (most Charismatics were white-collar workers), but all parts of the Midwest. Declining tax revenues, along with a general sense of desperation, seemed to fill the air of Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, etc. Integration may have also stoked these fears. Federal legislators pressured their local counterparts to redraw the lines of school districts, so as to ensure more racial diversity. These requirements led to the somewhat infamous practice of busing, or transporting African Americans (and sometimes whites) long distances to better integrate geographically separate populations. Amongst certain segments of the white community, a backlash developed, focused primarily on the creation of private academics that were, for

all intents and purposes, still segregated.⁵ These dual developments, which hit the Midwest particularly hard, may have prompted some of the apocalyptic fears of local Charismatics.⁶

Other, more global affairs could have also played a role. The 1970s were, internationally, a decade of high-profile events. The 1973 OPEC oil embargo, America's withdrawal from Vietnam, and growing fears of nuclear war and destruction all stoked fears about the nation's place in world affairs. Could the U.S. actually defend its way of life against the threat of Communism? How could the economy continue to function with such high gas prices and long lines at stations? Would there even be a world left if nuclear war broke out between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R? These questions, born of international politics, affected the internal perceptions of many Americans, undermining their confidence in and security at home.⁷

While these connections are more speculative, it is safe to assume that Charismatics across the country were disturbed by the trends of national politics. The 1970s was, after all, the decade of *Roe v. Wade*, the Equal Rights Amendment, and the beginnings of gay and lesbian protests. These events prompted despair in other conservative Christian groups, as evidenced by the emergence of the Moral Majority of the 1980s. Vocal Christian leaders like Jerry Falwell and others led the charge, banking on their supporters' absolute disgust with the previous decade. In the same way that these events of the 1970s provoked

⁵ For an example of such backlash, see Hasan Jeffries, *Bloody Lowndes: Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama's Black Belt* (New York City: New York University, 2010)

⁶ For more about the problems associated with deindustrialization, see Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010) and Katherine Marie Dudley, *The End of the Line: Lost Jobs, New Lives in Postindustrial America* (Chicago: U of Chicago, 1994)

⁷ For a general overview of the 1970s, see Bruce Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 2002); Natasha Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, 2007).

despair amongst other conservative Christians, it may have had similar effects among Charismatics. Anecdotal evidence suggests at least some role of these growing social trends in the sense of doom and gloom amongst covenant communities. Fr. Michael Scanlan of Steubenville, OH spoke openly of his distaste for the growing “rights culture” in 1981. “Political rights—for the rights of gays, lesbians, abortions,” he stated bluntly, “are not treated for what they are—lies. There is no right to commit sins.” The leader of the Servants of Christ the King blamed television, fashion, and the social sciences for these developments, as secular authorities thought they could usurp Christian authority in American culture.⁸ Dorothy Ranaghan of the People of Praise had similarly disdainful impressions of the era. While walking and window-shopping in the mall, she had spied, of all things, a wedding dress on a pregnant mannequin. This was more than just a fashion statement, she believed, but also had social connotations: it expressed society’s approval of premarital sex. “Sin was not only being named here but celebrated,” she wrote with revulsion.⁹ Thus, the liberal ascendancy in the 1970s seemed to have contributed to the pessimistic atmosphere of the Charismatics.

The mainstreaming of the Renewal might have strengthened this notion. Though Catholics and other Christians might be wary of the Renewal, few were lobbying to have Charismatics thrown out of their churches. The Pentecostal Movement had reached some level of respectability in society, with official estimates calculating around 500,000 Catholic practitioners nationally and unofficial estimates ranging just short of a million.

⁸ Pam Bauer, “Charismatics Warned God’s Wrath Coming,” *National Catholic Reporter*, June 19, 1981

⁹ Dorothy Ranaghan, “Notebook: Over the Line,” *New Covenant* (Dec 1981)

Few could feel that they were feeling persecution within the Church. The Pope had held Mass with them, for Christ's sake! Such security, however, may have facilitated the Movement's transition from "apologetic" to "prophetic."¹⁰ With hierarchical approval, members may have felt comfortable enough to call the Church to task on certain matters, or to embrace more radical ways of seeking holiness. Alternatively, the broadening appeal of the Renewal may have prompted worries about its authenticity. As diversity in any group increases, concerns about its purity likewise intensify. The Renewal may have seemed like it was getting "watered down" to some, that it was just becoming another part of the secular culture it had been trying to avoid. Either of these factors could have inspired this change of emphasis within the Renewal, both related to its need to witness more fully to the Truth.

Or, quite simply, it could have been the world of God for these groups to adopt a different outlook on the world and the place of their community in it. The previous explanations are not meant to be exhaustive, but to offer suggestions as to the environmental factors leading to the changing emphasis within the Renewal.

Regardless of its cause, however, perceptions of doom and gloom were rampant within the Word of God in Ann Arbor, MI. Other communities also demonstrated this changing relationship to the world, such as the Servants of Christ the King (Steubenville, OH), People of Praise (South Bend, IN), and Mother of God (Gaithersburg, MD), a result of close connections between these communities. Apprehensive visions of the future

¹⁰ "Charismatic Conference," *New York Times*, 21 June 1971; "'Charismatics' Gain in Churches: 'Charismatic Renewal' is Flourishing," *New York Times*, 8 Sept 1974

appeared in the writings and teachings of many prominent leaders during the late 1970s and early 1980s. “We are responding to a consistent, prophetic word or call from God to unite and prepare ourselves for ‘hard time,’” POP member Dorothy Ranaghan explained in 1977. “The sense of urgency is strong, the awareness of already being engaged in spiritual warfare on every level of life is all pervasive.”¹¹ Willaim Stanmeyer offered similar appraisals of the world outside in an article appearing in the WOG-sponsored *New Covenant*. Governments around the world were promoting secular humanism, he wrote conspiratorially, that “quasi-religious belief that there is no God or afterlife, that moral norms are only social conventions, that the state has a preeminent right to form moral attitudes, that there are no transcendent values or truths.”¹² Such teachings were meant to replace Christian love with patriotism, loyalty to the Church with loyalty to the State. These and other musings seemed to characterize covenant community life during this time, as a sense of impending doom only increased.

Fear led covenant communities to distance themselves from secular society. This social isolation, as previously noted, had been typical of the Charismatics and those in community most of all. “The community needs to recognize,” layman Terry Malone challenged fellow believers in 1975, “to what is simply filling people’s needs for security and certainty, and to what extent it is challenging them to grow. It needs to ask if it is actually stimulating renewal and change, or producing a new Christian ghetto.”¹³ Feeling

¹¹ Judith Tydings, “New Era for the Church?” *Logos Journal* (March/April 1977): 7-14

¹² Stanmeyer (NC); See also, James Hitchcock, “The Threat of Secularism,” *New Covenant* (May 1980) and Steve Clark, “What is Theological Secularism,” *New Covenant* (April 1981)

¹³ Terry Malone, “Ignatius House: An Experiment in Pentecostal Community,” *New Catholic World* (Nov/Dec 1974)

threatened, many covenant communities felt the urge not to emerge from, but rather to sink back into this ghetto. “We got the view that the whole world was falling apart,” one of the Servants of Christ the King recollected in retrospect, “that the only thing you can trust in is God’s word and those who are living by it—by implication the community.”¹⁴ With a time of trial on the horizon, covenant groups needed to know who they could trust; with their paranoia towards outside culture and tendencies towards spiritual elitism, covenant groups could only trust each other.

This sense elicited a variety of responses, but all aimed to safeguard the community. The WOG, for example, bought a 260 acre farm in 1979. Moving to a more secluded location or at least having the option, leaders reasoned, might be a way to better weather the coming storm.¹⁵ Other communities began more forcefully discouraging their members from pursuing outside activities. Community schools became quite commonplace amongst groups like the Mother of God, as did the pressure to only marry someone within the community. Another Charismatic or regular Catholic, they believed, might not appreciate the dynamics of community life.¹⁶

Indeed, this insular mindset even affected the communities’ relationship with the Catholic Church. The Church was not free from the faults of modern society, Peter Williamson declared at a WOG-sponsored conference. “The fall in church attendance, the exodus of priests, the rise in divorce,” he noted, “these are just some of the most prominent

¹⁴ “Catholic Charismatic Communities in Turmoil,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, July 21, 1991

¹⁵ Thomas J. Csordas, *Language, Charisma, and Creativity: The Ritual Life of a Religious Movement* (Berkeley, CA: U of California, 1997), 86

¹⁶ Justin Gillis, “The Believers Next Door,” *The Washington Post Magazine*, 13 April 1997, accessed online at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/mogmain.htm>

signs of a serious disturbance in Catholic life, signs of a weakening of Catholics' ability to maintain a way of life distinct from the surrounding secularized culture."¹⁷ For this reason, these Catholic communities attempted to make themselves relatively independent of their Catholic Church. The Servants of Christ the King, for example, banned outsiders from attending their community Masses, even though they were held in a public worship space (the Franciscan University of Steubenville chapel). The People of Praise did likewise, forming their own Catholic prep school and parish-less "Catholic fellowship" for worship.¹⁸ Leaders of the WOG took this process one step further. With the participation of willing community members, they contemplated sending people through various seminaries (Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Nondenominational). Such a plan would provide clergy who truly understood the dynamics of their community, the coordinators reasoned, enabling members to have their spiritual needs met in-house.¹⁹ All in all, this separatist impulse developed in response to the threat from the outside. Just like a turtle, porcupine, or armadillo, the communities folded back into themselves, unwilling to expose any weakness to the vicious world outside.

¹⁷ Peter Williamson & Kevin Perrotta, eds., *Christianity Confronts Modernity: A Theological and Pastoral Inquiry by Protestant Evangelicals and Roman Catholics* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1981), 9

¹⁸ Kevin McLaughlin, "Local and National Charismatic Groups Tied to U of Steubenville," *Religious News Service*, 16 Jan 1987; John Ferrone, "Why the Promise Failed," *Fidelity*, June 1986, 7-8

¹⁹ Scorsone, "Authority, Conflict, and Integration: The Catholic Charismatics Renewal Movement and the Roman Catholic Church," 80-84; Ferrone, "Why the Promise Failed"; "At First Catholic Pentecostal School, the Stress is on Spontaneous Devotion," *New York Times*, 28 June 1974

INCREASING AUTHORITARIANISM: THE WOG “TRAINING COURSE” AND THE STRUCTURING OF COMMUNITY LIFE

This fear of persecution justified increasingly authoritarian leadership. Ralph Martin of the Ann Arbor covenant described the coming battle in stark terms. “God is bringing the world to its knees,” he declared in 1975, “where it will be able to see clearly and to choose clearly life or death, God’s ways or man’s ways.” Before this could happen, however, the Charismatics living together needed to show that they could be “a people whom [God] can depend upon.” Martin concluded with a grand vision for his fellow believers of the WOG. “I can see more and more how our community...[is] being prepared to take part with Jesus in the coming spiritual warfare,” he explained, “functioning with the effectiveness of an army.”²⁰ Other proclamations by Martin continued this stream of martial imagery. “Once engaged in the battle we need to take on a wartime mentality,” he advised his fellow community members in 1987, “[which involves] being vigilant and leading the kind of life that the Lord will find pleasing on his return.” Such discipline and expectancy, he continued, was necessary because of the responsibilities held in store for those living as truly dedicated Christians. “Our assignment is to help as many people as possible get free from the rule of Satan, to throw down as many strongholds of Satan as we can, and to liberate and hold as much territory as we can,” he proclaimed dramatically.²¹ Such statements emphasized the importance of order and unity, discipline and authority. The mission of the community was to be soldiers. Soldiers do not question their orders; they follow them, respecting the hierarchy.

²⁰ “Charismatics Pledge ‘Spiritual Warfare,’” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 5 Sept 1975

²¹ Ralph Martin, “We’re in a Battle,” *New Covenant* (June 1987)

Steve Clark and other leaders of the WOG designed the “Training Course” to make such discipline a reality within community life. Utilized as a practical manual for sub-community leaders from 1980-1984, it reflected a vastly different vision of Charismatic living. The language echoed that of Martin, casting the coming years as a skirmish in the heavenly war. “We pledge our loyalty to all who fight with us,” members declared at the beginning of their training. This was just the first in a long series of promises, all centering on community living. They also issued shouts of, “We are ready to serve until the Lord indicates the war has been won”; “We will be loyal to our commanders, knowing that they are committed to defend and provide for our homes and families”; “We will serve where they direct us and in the way they direct us”; and “We will keep our plans and movements hidden from the enemy and his agents.”²² Such statements, by drawing on military terms and imagery, reinforced the perception 1) that a hard time was coming and 2) that obedience and sacrifice were essential for survival.

They also expressed a growing fear of individual weakness. The greatest strength of an army, leaders believed, was its unity. All needed to be marching together, shields raised and spears poised in a phalanx of truth. The Devil, they felt, was always poking and prodding, trying to exploit individual weakness to crack the entire structure. Such a belief gave communal importance to even the most trivial of individual matters. Being overweight or struggling with pornography, after all, might speak to a lack of discipline; being vain might demonstrate a preoccupation with things other than God. But could these personal failings harm the wider community? Absolutely, WOG coordinator Steve Clark

²² “Word of God Repents,” *Ann Arbor Observer*, Feb 1991; Csordas, *Language, Charisma, Creativity*, 87

answered. “The way individual Christians live their lives is not a private matter solely between them and God,” he explained in a 1984 treatise on living in Christian community. In the context of the “body” of Christians, he emphasized “the sin of one is harmful to the others.” The faults of the individual, though personal, “[could] block the action of God in the body” and even “affect the spiritual health...of the body.” There was no neutral ground. One’s personal life would either “build...up” the body, Clark concluded, or “weaken it and sometimes damage it.”²³ In this way, problems of the personal had ramifications for the communal.

Such perceptions validated communal oversight over formerly personal matters. The WOG, as well as other communities, increased the scope and authority of headship and submission. To safeguard the individual links of the communal chain, recalled a former Servant of Christ the King, heads came to oversee “every area of one’s life—from career, vocational decision, married and family life (including sexual relationships), finances, even free time.”²⁴ These meetings branched into the same secular areas as the formerly defunct and much criticized True House, such as one’s choice of major (theology was particularly discouraged) and how often one should visit one’s parents.²⁵ They delved into the most personal of matters, as well. Not only would they include questions about

²³ Stephen B. Clark, ed., *Patterns of Christian Community: A Statement of Community Order* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1984), 27-28

²⁴ Wendy Leifeld, “The Gender Issue,” *The National Catholic Register*, 17 May 1992, 5-6; “Charismatic Sect Dominated Lives, Ex-Members Say,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, 12 May 1991; “James Kiernan,” *Washington Post Magazine*, last updated 13 April 1997, accessed 14 Mar 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/members/kiernan.htm>

²⁵ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”; “Catholic Charismatic Communities in Turmoil,”; “Jane West,” *Washington Post Magazine*, last updated 13 April 1997, accessed 14 Mar 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/members/west.htm>

whether or not he masturbated, recollected on MOG member, but who he fantasized about, how far these fantasies went, whether these people were part of the community, and how many minutes it took him and his wife to have sex.²⁶ Sex was also a topic of interest in the Servants of Christ the King. “When I was in the community, my pastoral leaders knew more about my marital, sexual life than anybody, and he live[d] two doors down,” recollected John Flaherty of the Servants of Christ. “What it did was make my pastoral leader the head of my home,” he added resentfully.²⁷ Unprecedented openness and honesty, it was presumed, were necessary for this unprecedented assault on the integrity of the community.

Such breadth and honesty might have functioned well in the context of informal advice, but not within that of headship. The recommendations of heads, as a person supposed to be accountable for the spiritual life of another, took on an undue weight. When a head suggested that one should move into a different covenant household or choose one job over another, they were not really suggestions. Dating offered a particularly vivid example of this process. Wanting to guard against the temptations of the flesh, leaders gave heads authority over all romantic relationships. Young couples came together not through their own initiative, but rather at the behest of their heads. Heads determined when one could date, as well as whom they could date. While taking personal preferences into account, these decisions were ultimately the choice of another; they were presented as the will of the community, the will of God.²⁸ Other aspects of covenant life spoke to the power

²⁶ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”

²⁷ “Charismatic Sect Dominated Lives, Ex-Members Say”

²⁸ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”

of heads within Charismatic community. The community held prescriptive power over one's wardrobe, for example. Halter tops or backless dresses were openly prohibited, a measure hoping to promote modesty.²⁹ In this way, heads held an extreme amount of power over the life of another.

So did the community as a whole. One's fellow Charismatics were complicit in this system, believing that they were helping each other advance on the spiritual journey. Parents, especially, developed a system of surveillance with regard to their children and dating. "We'd be reporting back and forth to other parents: 'We saw your girl talking to this boy,'" recalled one member of the Mother of God. "We'd be encouraged to look through their dresser drawers for things, to read diaries if they had any."³⁰ Wendy Leifeld remembered the "virtually constant scrutiny" of herself and other housewives. Spending the majority of their time within the community, they were "more vulnerable to community control."³¹ Though such communal accountability undoubtedly helped some members grow in holiness, it also increased the control of heads and leadership over their lives.

This control became damaging because of its target. Steve Clark and other leaders celebrated the value of unity amongst the brethren. "The Lord wants a oneness for his people that is more than external...a oneness of mind and heart that is founded on assent to his revealed truth," he claimed in his 1984 work *Patterns of Christian Community*. "Such a oneness," Clark continued, was only achievable through authority and uniformity. "[It] depends on elders who lead the community well...[as well as] on the response of the

²⁹ "Word of God Repents"; "Catholic Charismatic Communities in Turmoil"

³⁰ Gillis, "The Believers Next Door"

³¹ Wendy Leifeld, "The Gender Issue, 2," *The National Catholic Register*, 24 May 1992

community members who should seek oneness with those who govern them and who should seek to have a body that can live and act in unity,” he elaborated.³² Other passages of the book offer similar interpretations of God’s call to his people. Divisions, Clark reasoned, could not come from God, as they only came from the Devil. “By submitting to their governors, they strengthen the body,” the leader explained in justification of his hard and fast stance. “Their submission prevents power struggles and conflicts and brings peace and unity....Submission frees the power of God to work in a body.”³³ Unity of mind, heart, and actions, therefore, was raised to a level of spiritual importance within covenant communities.

What this amounted to was a prohibition of individuality. Differences became equivalent to division, and diversity to the demonic. “There became only one way to get engaged, to raise your children, to structure and experience family life and probably most damaging, only one way to relate to God,” summarized an ex-covenant member.³⁴ Again, good intentions had motivated such an emphasis. “At the core of the leadership,” explained Ralph Martin in retrospect, “there seemed to be a mentality that there were only a few people who know how to do this right, and we needed to stay in control.”³⁵ Worried about the effects of modern culture on the habits and beliefs of those under their control, coordinators promoted a new way of thinking about the world, one particularly

³² Clark, *Patterns of Christian Community*, 66

³³ *Ibid.*, 59

³⁴ “There Is Life After Community or Why I Left,” 15 April 1991, Four Letters from Former Members, accessed 3 Mar 2016 at <https://es.scribd.com/doc/20729466/Four-Letters-from-Former-Members>

³⁵ “Catholic Charismatic Communities in Turmoil”

countercultural in an age and country of individualism. All too often, however, this way of thinking about the world was their own way, and the only way.

Headship meetings and community regulations, though undertaken with noble intentions, generally forced the will of the community upon an individual. “Headship meetings were grueling,” reported former Servants member Wendy Leifeld. “Last[ing] several hours,” they would begin with her head pulling out “pages of notes about [her].” “She would tell me everything that was wrong with me,” she recalled painfully, “and tell me everything I needed to do to conform to community teaching and be holy.” Such forceful recommendations struck Leifeld as somehow inappropriate, though she only recognized this in hindsight. “It was very demeaning and embarrassing. I was treated like a child—and a naughty one at that,” she recollected.³⁶ The secretive nature of these meetings also took their toll. Coordinators, intending to minimize community conflict, urged members to rely on their heads in time of spiritual struggles. What this amounted to, however, was a sense of isolation and loneliness, as well as lack of perspective on the broader community. “It wasn't that I thought the system was bad,” explained Gary Cummings of the Mother of God. “I thought I was the problem. I felt like I wasn't good enough. I was just a screw-off.”³⁷ Receiving such insistent advice and without a public forum to air their grievances, few realized how widely their issues were shared amongst the community and few lobbied for a change of the headship system.

³⁶ Leifeld, “The Gender Issue”

³⁷ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”; Kathleen Ferrone, “Praise Individuals but not Folly,” *Today's Catholic*, Dec 3, 1989, 16; Malone, “Ignatius House”

This was a vicious system of social control, Fr. Thomas Weinandy recalled, particularly when priests or nuns got involved. He recounted the saga of living with the Mother of God in Maryland. His presence, along with that of other priests and nuns, had reassured members of the community, even those who might have begun to have doubts. If any problem was going on, they reasoned, surely our spiritual shepherds would alert us to it. “Everybody thought the priests were talking to one another,” Fr. Weinandy explained, “and in actual fact, we weren’t. Because there was never a free exchange of information, we, as priests, never knew what each other was thinking.”³⁸ By reducing communication between religious figures, therefore, the system of headship even led priests to think that they were alone in their doubts. This sense of solitude prevented any sort of challenge to the community which, especially in the case of priests, reinforced the group’s “legitimacy.” This, in turn, reinforced members’ commitment to the Mother of God, which further discouraged questions and promoted adherence to covenant rules. “It’s amazing,” leader Ralph Martin wondered in retrospect. “Once you’re into a system like this, how internally consistent it all seems. The little disconcerting things when your instinct tells you there’s something wrong here, how easy it is to kind of swallow it. It’s almost like the scales have to fall away from your eyes to see some of this stuff.”³⁹

Factors beyond peer pressure also increased members’ acceptance of these increasingly authoritarian regulations. As evidenced by the testimony of Fr. Weinandy, most laypeople thought that these communities had hierarchical approval. This impression

³⁸ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”

³⁹ “Word of God Repents”

had come about in several ways. Covenant groups seemed to have positive relationships with local priests and bishops. And why would they not? “These people really take their faith seriously,” Bishop William Lori of Washington, D.C. recalled thinking of the Mother of God. “If everyone took their faith that seriously...[the church] would be on fire.” Auxiliary Bishop Joseph McKinney of Grand Rapids, MI had similar opinions of the WOG, welcoming it particularly in light of the confusion following Vatican II.⁴⁰ This visible approval, in addition to the presence of priests in community, squelched doubts about these communities’ orthodoxy. In reality, however, few of these authority figures truly knew what was happening in community life. “I certainly don't think anybody here perceived any kind of a major difficulty,” reported Bishop Lori in retrospect. “I think the general feeling was that it was something new, but firmly enough grounded in the sacramental life and teaching of the church that it was on a good track.”⁴¹ Even when the hierarchy did not openly support community life, leaders often claimed that they did. “Members have been told that the bishop knows about the community, its goals and methods and he approves,” stated Bishop Albert Ottenweller of Steubenville, OH in 1991. “The truth is that I do not know what is going on.”⁴² This hierarchical weight, whether real or just perceived, dissuaded members from questioning community directives.

Charismatics also felt a deep sense of commitment to their communities. As part of a covenant, they felt that they had really come into their faith. There was a sense of

⁴⁰ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”; “Renewal: Pentecostals: Old Faith, New Impact,” *Los Angeles Times*, 11 Jan 1976

⁴¹ Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”

⁴² “Catholic Bishop of Steubenville to Probe Charismatic Community,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, 5 May 1991

dedication, mixed with love and nostalgia, associated with the community. “I loved the feeling of belonging to a group of people who had a deep faith and prayer life,” explained Jane West of her time in the Mother of God. “During our first few years there was plenty of fun: picnics, skits, concerts, summer camp for the kids and so forth.” Such fond memories and deep friendships kept West from abandoning the community. “We were in a conundrum,” she remembered. “We stayed because we loved many of the people there and still hungered for community life.”⁴³ The pleasant times may have ended, many must have believed, but then again the spiritual life was not guaranteed to be pleasant. Suffering was part and parcel of the spiritual life, MOG member James Kiernan believed, and a special way to demonstrate one’s true devotion. “[My experience of the BoHS] motivated me to be willing to suffer for God as a way of proving to God my love for Him because of His love for me,” he detailed.⁴⁴ Though unpleasant currently, many members held, community life was calling them to a greater and more mature holiness.

Practical considerations also informed community members’ acceptance of authoritarianism. Members feared that expressing doubts or raising questions might lead to their dismissal from the covenant. If someone was openly dissatisfied with community life, especially a life assumed to be guided by the Spirit, the logic went, did they truly belong in community? Such a proposition was terrifying for Charismatics. This was their spiritual community, their figurative (and often literal) brothers and sisters of faith. This was a group of people seeking the Lord earnestly, fervently, so different from the rest of

⁴³ “Jane West”; Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”

⁴⁴ “James Kiernan”

American society and even the Church. This was their refuge, particularly with the growing power of Satan in the world. This was, to many, unacceptable. They acceded to community demands, fearing what they would lose if they acknowledged any sort of doubt.⁴⁵

Leaders reinforced this fear in several ways, which increased obedience. Coordinators, sub-community leaders, and individual heads, explained WOG leader Ralph Martin, worked hard to dissuade people from departing, especially those who were having second thoughts about community life. “We presumed that the best thing for everybody was that they be part of the Word of God,” he admitted in 1991. Charismatics, after all, honestly believed that their communities offered the most genuine experience of living life in the Spirit, growing in holiness, and avoiding the traps of Satan. With so much on the line, Martin continued, leaders intentionally made the process difficult. “If people wanted to leave, we’d give them a hard time and give them the impression that they were leaving the best thing for something not so good,” he detailed.⁴⁶ To prevent members from leaving, therefore, it also became necessary to punish those who had already left. Martin and Clark, for example, urged community members to avoid contact with departed member Thomas Yoder. Even his friends, Yoder recalled, would not return his calls; members of the community even refused him the kiss of peace during Mass.⁴⁷ Such treatment was regrettable, the coordinators undoubtedly believed, but necessary both for Yoder’s sake

⁴⁵ “Word of God Repents”; Gillis, “The Believers Next Door”

⁴⁶ “Word of God Repents”

⁴⁷ Ibid; Josephine Massyngberde Ford, *Which Way for Catholic Pentecostals?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 85; Malone, “Ignatius House”; “Charismatics II,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 29 Aug 1975; Csordas, *Language, Charisma, and Community*, 89

and the sake of community. Tough love might convince Yoder to come back and acknowledge his faults.⁴⁸ It also safeguarded those already living in community. With the threat of spiritual warfare looming, those in charge preferred to take the Biblical injunction of Matthew 5:29-30 literally: it was better to cut off one member of the body than to risk eternal damnation. For these variety of reasons, therefore, members and leaders of covenant communities allowed these institutions to embrace a very authoritarian and structured lifestyle, one seemingly at odds with the freedom, movement, and equanimity so characteristic of the Holy Spirit.

Especially strict regulations emerged surrounding marriage and child-rearing. In the Servants of Christ the King, for example, women were not allowed to hire babysitters, nor were they allowed to spend too much time with their male children after the age of three. Leaders further discouraged men from wearing any sort of pink clothing, offering emotional support to their wives during pregnancy or other illnesses, or getting too involved in early childcare. Women should listen to their husbands, accepting his authority as her personal head. Husbands and wives should not become too attached to each other, they maintained, nor should children and parents. Perhaps the only positive recommendation (and not negative prohibition) involved the favoring of community life. The leadership of covenant communities greatly encouraged living together with other families, even at the price of giving up one's own home.⁴⁹ These and other rules set forth

⁴⁸ Clark, *Patterns of Christian Community*, 37

⁴⁹ "Catholic Charismatic Communities in Turmoil"; "Charismatic Sect Dominated Lives, Ex-Members Say"; Stephen Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980), 602-605, 649, 660

a rigid definition of married life, dictating how one raised one's children to how one related to one's spouse.

The logic undergirding these regulations was twofold. First, Clark and other leaders worried about maintaining proper relationships between the sexes. Women, naturally built for the domestic sphere, should not shirk the duties for which God had naturally built them (care of house, children). "Women should experience satisfaction in meeting the personal needs of men and other women, and the men in the community should express their appreciation and respect for this service in tangible ways," Clark advised.⁵⁰ The same applied to men spending too much time on housework or child-care or, for that matter, in pink shirts. Men were supposed to fulfill their masculine roles, being strong male leaders who gathered resources from outside the home...and never wore effeminate colors. The promotion of community life, as well, tried to right what was wrong in modern society. Clark and other worried about the effects of an insular family living by itself; was not the entire point of covenant community to live together, recognizing an individual's inability to live apart from Christ? The same applied to the individual family. Families would get into trouble on their own. Leaders thus promoted the familial bond only with caution, noting that such relationships could actually hold a believer back from Christ.

These recommendations, just like everything else in community life, took on a new importance in the context of the coming spiritual warfare. With battle on the horizon, discipline alone would not be enough; the community needed men ready to fight. Men, as appropriate to their God-given gender roles, would defend the covenant groups in the face

⁵⁰ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 605

of Satanic and worldly forces. To do this, however, they had to remain men. Clark worried openly about the effect of life in the modern world on true masculinity. “Mothers tend to hold on to their sons,” Steve Clark warned, “girl-friends let their lives center emotionally on their boy-friends, and wives constantly reach out for more of their husbands’ companionship and concern and are resentful when they do not get it.” “The effect,” he concluded, “is to feminize the man.”⁵¹ Regulations thus aimed to extract men from these potentially feminizing relationships, whether that meant separating a husband from his wife during labor or a son from his mother after a certain age. Men needed their distance, as well as proper male role models, if they hoped to be strong and authentic enough to repel Satan’s forces.⁵²

These masculine expectations affected feminine realities, as well. Women were encouraged to think of men as another head, someone to whom they listened and showed obedience. When coupled with the authority promoted in community, this meant that women were living in profoundly unequal relationships. Wendy Leifeld of Steubenville recounted how this ideal of domestic life poisoned her formerly happy marriage. “We began our marriage as friends,” she recalled. “But we entered community eight months after we were married, and that was no longer seen as an appropriate way to relate.” Unspoken peer pressure and explicit advice from the community helped change this relationship. After all, Leifeld and her husband must have reasoned, these people seemed like they knew what they were doing. Who were they to question something they had just

⁵¹ Ibid., 646

⁵² Ibid., 649

joined? The effects were gradual, but dramatic. “My purpose in life at that time, my identity, was to be an extension of my husband. I needed to be the person who would best meet his needs,” Leifeld remembered. She elaborated on the issue, explaining what sort of marriage the covenant community was promoting. “Marriage became the means to an end: the most efficient way to get things done: a way to serve the Lord and the mission,” she concluded, “not the sacrament that it is. I felt that God wasn’t concerned with *us* as much as He was concerned with the *mission*.”⁵³ Though dismayed and distraught, Leifeld felt paralyzed, unable to question the directions of the community. “I can say now what I feel, but at the time, I didn’t ‘feel,’” she reported. “We were so well trained to think instead of feel, [trained] that feelings were irrelevant. Basically I’d say that I was numb.”

Leifeld critiqued such an approach for failing to do precisely what it was designed for: preserving the sanctity of man and sanctity of woman. “A woman’s greatest strengths,” she believed, “lie in her ability to give herself freely and unreservedly to those whom she loves, to be attentive to the personhood of others.” The distraught wife saw this gift of giving, along with a woman’s “common sense and intuition,” as her primary purpose in this life. Woman’s purpose was to bring life to man. “Yet in community,” she detailed, “[this] God-given right to freely give of herself was often robbed by making it a demand. Denied intimacy with her husband, her mothering channeled and curtailed, left with superficial relationships with other women, and mired in a deep mistrust of one’s own emotions and personality, women frequently felt cut off from their deepest nature.”⁵⁴ This

⁵³ Leifeld, “The Gender Issue,”

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

coercion, more than the actual beliefs themselves, seemed to most irk Leifeld. As someone with more traditional beliefs about gender roles, she complained of lacking freedom, not direction.

Such was the cost, it seemed, of covenant community life. Adopting a model of discernment and spiritual growth based on collectivism rather than individualism, some members were bound to feel resentful of the process. But, as covenant leaders must have believed, not everyone was called to the true service of Christ. Christianity was only for the most committed, those who would not let temporal concerns or personal preference get in the way of holiness. One imagines they took the words of Deuteronomy 4:29 to heart. “Yet when you seek the Lord, your God,” the verse promises, “you shall indeed find him if you search after him with all your heart and soul.” When confronted with a world hostile to authority, a world so seemingly intent on tearing down the victories of the Renewal, covenant leaders decided to stay true to their beliefs, doubling down on their support of obedience. In this way, they were genuinely seeking God, no less than the monks of Pecos. Covenant communities simply hoped to get there a different way, choosing to emphasize headship and submission over inner healing and depth psychology, as well as community stability over flexibility. Theirs was the refuge, the bulwark, meant to save the Renewal from the designs of the Evil One.

CHAPTER 7: “THESE PEOPLE ARE ALLIES BUT IN A DIFFERENT WAY”: *PECOS, COVENANT COMMUNITIES, AND THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL*

In the early days of the Renewal, its evangelists were working almost nonstop. Charismatic priest and healer Francis MacNutt crisscrossed the country and even the continent, taking frequent trips to South America as well as places like Tennessee and California. Abbot Geraets and the Pecos monastery were offering retreats every weekend of the year, and almost every weekday as well. Steve Clark performed his role not only as the head coordinator of the WOG, but also as part of community sub-committees, the National Service Committee, and official oversight of *New Covenant*. True House leader Jim Byrne was no exception to this trend. The recent Notre Dame graduate traveled almost constantly, going to places like Chicago, Albuquerque, San Francisco, and Benet Lake to lead Charismatic Days of Renewal and offer advice to newly-forming prayer groups. Despite their diversity of ministry, these leaders held true to a common mission: spreading the Charismatic Renewal to as many people as possible.

Byrne experienced some of his greatest success in California. There, he connected with fellow Charismatics Kerry Koller and Jerry and Claire Harvey, the emerging leaders of covenant communities in San Francisco and San Diego. The four individuals met together frequently, discussing Byrne’s strategy to spread the Renewal to the entire country. Many of these conferences and correspondences revolved around the young leader’s hope for “regionalization.” The Charismatic Renewal needed greater structure, Byrne argued, as well as a greater uniformity of teaching. There was too much enthusiasm on the local level, he continued, too much of a desire for people to organize their “own”

conferences or produce their “own” prayer books. Such actions, while admirable, ultimately represented “unnecessary local distraction from pastoral matters” and a “needless duplication of effort.”¹ Why put so much effort into reinventing the wheel, he pleaded, especially when Ann Arbor and South Bend communities had already created a viable process. “We have developed the expertise and ministry to the point where we think that we know how to do it and make it a real service,” he wrote to the Harveys. “We think it makes sense that we direct things.”² Such a coordination, he explained, would thus free local communities to focus on their local efforts, while at the same time ensuring professional conferences and theologically sound teachings.

Byrne proposed “regionalization” to ameliorate such concerns. Leaders would divide the country into four geographic regions: East, South, Midwest, and West, each with a designated point community. This would be the most vibrant, most fruitful community within the region, such as covenant groups in New Orleans (South) or Chicago (Midwest). The point communities would be responsible for communicating with the National Service Committee (largely staffed by South Bend and Ann Arbor), True House’s leader explained, and for implementing this centralized vision in their subordinate prayer groups and conferences. In this way, he concluded, covenant communities could help spread a unified vision of the Renewal across the country, freeing up local groups to concentrate on

¹ Letter from Jim Byrne to Mrs. Joyce Seiver, 14 Aug 1972, Box 1, Correspondence—California (Southern), James E. Byrne Papers [hereafter referred to as JEB], University of Notre Dame Archives, Notre Dame, IN 46556 [hereafter referred to as UNDA]

² Letter from Jim Byrne to Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Harvey from Jim Byrne, 19 Oct 1972, Box 1, Correspondence—California (Southern), JEB, UNDA

evangelization, and allowing Ann Arbor and South Bend to provide the instruction and organization.³

Such a vision prompted interesting discussions amongst Byrne, Koller, and the Harveys, correspondence and minutes that testified to some of the tensions hidden beneath the outward enthusiasm of the Renewal. The three leaders expressed their exasperation, for example, with Joyce Seiver and the Orange County Renewal Committee. Seiver, its founder and most influential personality, seemed particularly resistant to folding into this national structure. “There was much heated feeling from [the] L.A. group against the development of a power structure, monolithic thought and teaching,” explained Byrne in 1972, with the worry that “any group could then set themselves up as the authority and power of the Renewal.”⁴ This resistance continued, even after Byrne sent direct letter to the Los Angeles leader, pleading with her to focus less on “cultivat[ing] [her] own teaching, machinery for service” and instead join in with the “clear” vision of the National Service Committee. Seiver, Kerry Koller summarized after such efforts, was committed to her “So. Cal way of doing things” and could not be convinced of the value of a greater coordination and cooperation.⁵ Based on this resistance, Byrne and his collaborators actively conspired against Seiver. “Develop some kind of strategy for L.A.,” the minutes of one 1972 meeting read. “There seem to be many there who are not willing to follow Joyce.”⁶ How fully

³ “Agenda for Oct 5, 6, 1972,” Box 1, Administrative Committee, 1972, JEB, UNDA

⁴ “So. Calif,” 20 Aug 1972, Box 1, Misc. Information on Prayer Groups, JEB, UNDA

⁵ “Re: The Real Situation in the West: Kerry’s Report on the W. Coast Scene,” 22 Oct 1971, Box 1, Correspondence--California (Southern), JEB, UNDA

⁶ “Meeting of Kerry Koller, Jerry and Claire Harvey, Jim Byrne & Companions, San Diego,” 24 July 1972, Box 1, Correspondence--California (Southern), JEB, UNDA

Byrne and his followers committed to this plan is unclear, though records certainly exist showing that they discussed Seiver's problematic leadership with other personalities in the Renewal.⁷ By 1973, their dreams had become reality. Seiver officially resigned from the Orange County Renewal Committee. She expressed her regret in a letter to Byrne, noting that, after some unspecified discussions within the Los Angeles Renewal, she felt it better no longer to be part of the Movement at all. "Anything that I might do now will have to develop out of completely new situations...perhaps outside of Catholic circles completely," she wrote regretfully, noting that "any other approach would be interpreted as disruptive."⁸ Regardless of how complicit Byrne and his fellows were in Seiver's demise, the evidence points towards some influence in pushing her out, to the tensions in the broader Renewal.

So too, did a cryptic line from the minutes of a meeting on July 24, 1972. Jim Byrne, Kerry Koller, Jerry and Claire Harvey, and others had gathered yet again to discuss their vision of the Renewal in the West. "We need to join ourselves with those with a similar vision," they declared, and "leave others to the Lord." They decided to focus their collective efforts on cultivating responsibility amongst Charismatics, promoting a style of life that "extends beyond meetings to the lives and living situations of those involved." Such a message, the leaders held, would be best spread through Charismatics Renewal Services on a national level, not regional associations. Before they ended the meeting,

⁷ Letter from Jim Byrne to Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Harvey, 17 Aug 1972, Box 1, Correspondence--California (Southern), JEB, UNDA

⁸ Letter from Jim Byrne to Joyce Seiver, 8 Feb 1973, Box 1, Correspondence--California (Southern), JEB, UNDA

however, the covenant leaders added one note of caution to their plan. “Beware of sharing everything with Msgr. Rosage [of Spokane, WA] and Fr. Geraets,” the meeting minutes read. “These people are allies but in a different way.”⁹ Why would covenant leaders have such qualms with Geraets and other Charismatic clergy, particularly given the Abbot’s steadfast efforts to promote the Renewal both at home and abroad? The leaders of covenant communities, hoping to spread their vision of the Renewal nationwide, looked to exclude alternative perspectives on Charismatic life, of which Pecos’ was the most prominent.

SPREADING THE RENEWAL: THE WORD OF GOD, THE PEOPLE OF PRAISE, AND THE QUEST FOR NATIONAL COORDINATION

The Word of God, People of Praise, and other covenant communities had, from the beginning of the Renewal, played a prominent role in promoting its spread. Both had sent out countless missionaries in the early 1970s; True House had committed itself to sponsoring the first Charismatic conferences at Notre Dame. The WOG had become especially prominent in the field of publishing. It had codified the *Life in the Spirit* seminar series in 1969, which provided prayer groups with a standardized, introductory course for newcomers to the Movement. *New Covenant*, though initially circulated in Michigan and known as *Pastoral Renewal*, became the only national Charismatic publication, reaching over 60,000 members. Servant Publications, as well, had developed as an outreach of the WOG. The publishing press aimed to do much the same as *New Covenant*: promote the spirituality and health of the Renewal as well as its transmission to others through pamphlets, books, tapes, etc. The People of Praise branched into other aspects of ministry,

⁹ “Meeting of Kerry Koller, Jerry and Claire Harvey, Jim Byrne & Companions, San Diego”

primarily through its formation of Charismatic Renewal Services (CRS). In addition to organizing national and regional conferences, CRS distributed the recordings and writings of Servant Publications.¹⁰ Other communities took on similar ministries, such as the *Word Among Us* magazine produced by the Mother of God in Gaithersburg, MD. All in all, however, the WOG and POP became the two most influential communities within the Renewal, both in terms of their size and their impact on ministry.

The formation and constitution of the National Service Committee most vividly illustrated this fact. Formed by those associated with these two communities in 1970, the NSC hoped to give some structure to the Renewal, as well as represent it to the Church and the world as a whole. Given their prominent roles in the beginnings of the Movement, members of the WOG and POP made up the majority of the eight-person committee throughout the 1970s. Ralph Martin and Steve Clark hailed from the WOG, whereas Kevin Ranaghan and Bert Ghezzi came out of the POP. Others, such as James Byrne, Fr. George Kosicki, and Fr. Edward O'Connor rounded out the list. The twenty-five person Advisory Committee showed somewhat more diversity, including two women and leaders from a greater range of prayer groups across the country. This structure attempted to promote the Charismatic Renewal, explained sociologist Fr. Joseph Fichter. "There is obvious planning and vision of labor and assignment of tasks," he reported. Few things just "happen[ed]."¹¹

¹⁰ "Charismatic Communities," *The National Catholic Reporter*, 12 Sept 1975; Roberta Catharine Keane, "Formal Organization and Charisma in a Catholic Pentecostal Community," PhD diss U of Michigan, 1974, 65

¹¹ Robert Crowe, *Pentecostal Unity: Recurring Frustration and Enduring Hope* (Chicago: Loyola U Press, 1993), 65; Joseph Fichter, "How It Looks to a Social Scientist," *New Catholic World*, Nov/Dec 1974: 244-248; "NSC Past and Present Members," National Service Committee Chariscenter, last updated 2016, accessed 15 April 2016, <http://www.nsc-chariscenter.org/about-us/nsc-members-and-nsc-council/nsc-past-and-present-members/>

The NSC and AC, therefore, became important for understanding the visions of these individuals for the Renewal as a whole.

The dedication of the WOG and POP to the Service Committee, when coupled with the travels of Jim Byrne, testified to the importance with which the communities viewed the collective organization. Though administered by these two Midwestern communities, Servant Publications, *New Covenant*, and Charismatic Renewal Services all fell under the purview of the National Service Committee. The work was performed almost always by those from these communities, but the NSC and the Advisory maintained oversight and received a cut of the revenue. Similar dedication was apparent in the hosting of conferences and other events. While the NSC was technically in charge of the 1977 extravaganza in Kansas City (which attracted over 60,000 Charismatics), it was essentially a work of the POP. The South Bend community had provided ninety percent of the personnel and managers for the event, representing a massive undertaking and expenditure of community effort.¹² While the communities certainly held conferences and oversaw activities outside of the NSC, it represented a major emphasis in community life.

The two communities wanted to bring national structure to the Renewal, as evidenced by an overture by Jim Byrne to the monks of Pecos. Writing to Prior Jim Scully in April 1971, Byrne invited the Pentecostal monastery to send a representative to the National Advisory Committee. “We think that that it is most important that your group be represented in such a National Committee,” the True House leader began. He held this

¹² David Manuel, *Like a Mighty River* (Orleans, MA: Rock Harbor, 1977), 43

opinion, moreover, despite or perhaps because of Pecos' uniqueness as a monastic and Charismatic community.

You are having a considerable influence on the movement around the country, and I think that your vision is different than ours, that your perspective is different from our perspective, and that it is most helpful to involve as many people with different visions and different perspectives, so that we might be more open to the sort of work that the Lord wants. Therefore, we would feel deeply impoverished not to have one of the monks from Pecos on the Committee.¹³

Byrne suggested either Fr. Scully or Fr. Geraets would be an appropriate choice. In response to such a flattering invitation, Fr. Scully could only reply in the affirmative. He sent Byrne a letter on May 14, communicating this news as well as offering prayers for the upcoming Charismatic conference sponsored by True House. "Don't forget you have a standing invitation to escape to Pecos any time of the year," the monk reminded warmly.¹⁴

Beyond inviting members onto the Advisory Committee, Byrne also traveled around, serving as unofficial evangelist for the work of the National Service Committee. His activities in California, in fact, speak to this emphasis. The leader of True House tried to work with the local prayer groups, hoping to bring them into closer communion with the work already being done back East. These issues came out most clearly in a letter between Byrne and the leaders of a prominent prayer group in San Diego, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Harvey. There were various options for the Renewal, he explained. The West could remain largely set off from the rest of the nation, working through a "loose and ad hoc level of cooperation" with the East. Alternatively, the West could work together with the East

¹³ Letter from Jim Byrne to Daniel Scully, 28 April 1971, Box 1, Advisory Committee: Correspondence with Members N through Z, JEB, UNDA

¹⁴ Letter from Daniel Scully to Jim Byrne, 14 May 1971, Box 1, Advisory Committee: Correspondence with Members N through Z, JEB, UNDA

through Charismatic Renewal Services. Technically, Byrne admitted, the conferences and teachings would be owned by CRS, but everyone would benefit: the teachings, administrations, and even profits would improve. The presentations at a recent local conference, he noted, “while good, did not take advantage of the rich teaching available through the Service Committee.” Deeper, more theoretical considerations also led Byrne to support this option. “I guess that we think that the charismatic renewal is more than a private and individual renewal, and that there are evolving new structures of common life within the Church through this [R]enewal,” he explained of the Service Committee’s vision.¹⁵ He urged the Harveys, therefore, to work more fully with the Renewal on the national level.

This communication paralleled the work of Byrne and other Service Committee members across the nation. As part of this regionalization strategy, he had been cultivating relationships with covenant communities in New Orleans, Chicago, Dallas, and Augusta, GA.¹⁶ Fr. Michael Scanlan, as well, joined the chorus supporting the tying together of the Renewal. He believed that such collaborative effort, while increasing national presence of the Renewal, would also allow for more diversity.¹⁷ The WOG and others also pushed for this effort, promoting a general association of covenant communities. It gathered national leaders together at Ann Arbor in 1972 and subsequent years, hoping to facilitate a broader

¹⁵ Letter from Jim Byrne to Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Harvey from Jim Byrne, 19 Oct 1972

¹⁶ “Agenda for Oct 5, 6, 1972”

¹⁷ “Report on National Liaison Conference Held at the College of Steubenville, Ohio,” 25-26 June 1976, Box 14, Folder 2, Louis Rogge Collection [hereafter referred to as ROG], UNDA

national dialogue about the structures and successes of Charismatic life.¹⁸ The national conferences continued at Notre Dame, only increasing in numbers and notoriety every year. Again, these efforts sought to bring together those in the Renewal to promote a unified vision of the future and avoid the disorganization and discord that might allow Satan to halt something so good.

When communities like the WOG and POP encouraged such a national vision, however, they tended to promote the brand of Renewal present in their own communities. Fr. Edward O'Connor and Jim Byrne were the first to note this desire. O'Connor, though a prominent apologist for and supporter of the Renewal since its beginning, resigned his post on the National Service Committee in October 1973. Though still committed to Pentecostalism as a whole, he wrote in a letter, he could no longer support the mission of the Service Committee, primarily because of the control exerted by covenant communities. He worried especially about the effect of *New Covenant* and other publications, reaching over 50,000 Charismatics, most of them prayer group leaders. “[They] receive their teaching as a kind of gospel...credit[ing] it with something approaching infallibility,” he lamented.¹⁹ True House leader Jim Byrne offered his own criticism of the direction of the WOG/POP Renewal. He questioned the presence of Protestants on *New Covenant's* editorial board, as well as other, more ecumenical efforts by the two communities. This opposition, along with the authority issues of True House, led to his removal from the NSC

¹⁸ Suzanne Rozell Scorsone, “Authority, Conflict, and Integration: The Catholic Charismatics Renewal Movement and the Roman Catholic Church,” PhD diss U of Toronto, 1979, 92; Rev. John Randall, *In God's Providence: The Birth of a Catholic Charismatic Parish* (Plainsfield, NJ: Living Flame Press, 1973), 34

¹⁹ Scorsone, “Authority, Conflict, and Integration,” 49

despite his longtime service and dedication.²⁰ Outside observers, as well, commented on the handling of teachings, conferences, etc. “In a movement where members are expectant and anxious for the word of God telling them what to believe and how to live,” the *National Catholic Reporter*’s Rick Casey observed cynically, “control over official teachings is a powerful force.”²¹ These conflicts and concerns spoke to the consistency with which the WOG and POP promoted their agenda through the National Service Committee, insisting that the Renewal take a shape similar to their own.

In the contentious debates that broke out at Charismatic gatherings, other leaders in the Renewal came to understand the rigidity of the WOG/POP vision. Many leaders gave up coming to these meetings, so filled were they with seemingly pointless and endless arguments about the proper “direction” of the Renewal.²² A January 1977 gathering of the National Advisory Committee, for example, devolved into a prolonged discussion about the trust the Renewal should place in modern culture. POP co-coordinator Kerry Koller opened the meeting with teaching. He spoke openly of his distaste for the “fog machine” of secular society, cautioning his fellow believers to guard against bastardized versions of the Christian faith. “This liberal humanism merged with Christianity,” he warned, “clouds the basic truths and confuses people about the Word of God.” As such, he concluded, it could only be the work of Satan. “People need to come together and get committed with one another and to stand fast in the days of testing,” he advised, and not fall victim to the

²⁰ Ibid., 47-48; Douglas Salerno, “A Rhetorical Assessment of the Catholic Pentecostal Movement,” PhD diss U of Michigan, 1983, 283

²¹ “Charismatic Communities”

²² Salerno, “A Rhetorical Assessment of the Catholic Pentecostal Movement,” 260-270

ploy of division and the Devil.²³ Ranaghan echoed his covenant brother's statements, explaining that he was "anxious for unity in the Catholic [C]harismatic [R]enewal in face of the hard times and difficult days which we perceive will come down the pike." "People need to come together and get committed with one another and to stand fast in the days of testing," he declared. Only through a "united [R]enewal," he concluded, could everything "hang together."

Other Charismatic leaders disagreed openly with such a bleak outlook on culture and the future. Fr. George Montague spoke up first. The Marianist priest took issue with Ranaghan and Koller's wholesale dismissal of Christian humanism, seeing the two philosophies as two sides of the same coin. Christianity offered the "prophetic" element by pointing to higher realities, he explained, whereas the humanism spoke to the realities of the human condition. Together, they made Christianity more accessible to the modern world. After all, he noted, "we have a mission not just to punch the world in the face or the devil in the face, but to pour the oil on humanity." Other national figures joined Montague. Joe Breault of Rutherford, N.J. saw the fog as part of each person's spiritual journey. "I believe that the fog is necessary in the understanding stage to bring the truth forth," he argued. "We need to be clear about the basics [Jesus is Lord], but not to get rid of things about which people are still struggling to understand." Abbot Geraets echoed this viewpoint, emphasizing the history of syncretism in Catholicism. "The Church has always

²³ "Summary," Jan 1977, Box 14, Folder 3, ROG, UNDA

looked at things positively in the environment and the world around them and then baptized them,” he chided gently.²⁴

The debate ended inconclusively, with Steve Clark of the WOG urging both unity and for believers to prepare themselves for the end times. Discussions along these lines seemed to pop up in the Advisory Committee with some frequency, as evidenced by a statement of Fr. Kilian McDonnell’s in 1980. Another early apologist for the Movement, McDonnell pleaded with Charismatic leaders to broaden their perspective towards modern society. “Not all secular humanism is atheistic,” he cautioned, noting that even “the Church owes a debt to secular humanism.” He stressed its value in making the Gospel relevant to the world today. “You have two things [in the gospel],” he explained. “You have Christ in judgment over culture but you also have Christ incarnated in culture. Both belong to the full gospel witness.”²⁵ Such statements testified to the growing tension on the national level, as non-covenanted groups bristled at the vision of the Renewal promoted by the WOG and POP.

Similar disputes emerged over other aspects of Charismatic life. Leaders debated the preferred form and location of the Renewal. Prominent covenant communities worked to teach other Charismatics about their style of life. Ann Arbor brought in over 1000 visitors in 1972 alone, in addition to sponsoring retreats for the leaders of prayer groups to discuss problems. Such meetings, however, were meant for more than just airing grievances. The WOG brought people into its life in order to convince them of its value

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Kilian McDonnell, “Statement to the National Advisory Committee Meeting,” 11-14 Jan 1980, Box 14, Folder 3, ROG, UNDA

and teach them how to live Charismatically.²⁶ Evangelization work promoted the same goal. As groups like the WOG in Ann Arbor and the WOG in Providence, RI (no relation) helped their Charismatic brothers and sisters establish prayer groups in the area, they established themselves as de-facto spiritual authorities. These relationships meant, quite simply, that when local leaders began searching for more committed ways to seek Charismatic life, they would turn to those who had taught them. For the most involved of communities, therefore, the covenant community appeared to be the ideal community, an emulation of the success enjoyed in South Bend and Ann Arbor.²⁷ The criticisms of Chicago Catholic Pentecostal Leslie Miller spoke to this influence. “Some people outside the [R]enewal with covenant communities and many in the [R]enewal tend to equate the term community with covenant community, she complained”²⁸ Admittedly, covenanted Charismatics numbered, at their height, perhaps 15,000 out of the 600,000 Charismatics nationally, at very most three percent of the total. Still, given the commitment required by covenant life and the impact of these people on the work of the Renewal overall, this figure is impressive nonetheless. Ann Arbor and other groups of Charismatics successfully promoted their way of life on the national stage.

In doing so, they also catered to Charismatic worries about parish involvement. Many Charismatics, reported a group of Bishops’ Liaisons regarding the Movement, were

²⁶ Keane “Formal Organization and Charisma in a Catholic Pentecostal Community,” 65; Fabián Medina Sánchez, *Secretos de Confesión* (Managua: Editorial La Prensa, 2002), 230; Russ Bellant, “Secretive Puebla Institute Has Ties to CIA, Contras, Conservative Bishops,” *National Catholic Reporter*, Nov 18, 1988

²⁷ Randall, *In God’s Providence*, 34

²⁸ Letter from Leslie Miller to Kevin Ranaghan, February 1981, Box 14, Folder 2, ROG, UNDA

reluctant to establish themselves formally inside of a parish. They feared that “the Charismatic Renewal will be watered down and lose its peculiar force for the renewal of the Church by being established as a parish organization, or even given such a name.”²⁹ Indeed, this preoccupation seemed to be widespread throughout the Renewal. Especially among the most involved, there existed persistent concern that their attention to the Holy Spirit would simply become another organization on the parish bulletin, the “modern equivalents of novenas, benediction, and other devotional activities.”³⁰

Kerry Koller openly acknowledged such fears in an interview about his St. John the Baptist Community in San Francisco. “Some feel that we have to try and recast ourselves as soon as possible into traditional Catholic terms,” the lay leader noted, “[while] others say it would co-opt the movement to do this.” Koller placed himself squarely in the second camp, even though acknowledging it had led to “some really heated discussions” among his Charismatic brethren. “I feel that the movement hasn’t finished its work yet,” he explained. “Later it can fit itself into the whole Catholic picture. But first we have to reconstruct basic Christian communities.” For this reason, this work to be done still, the Charismatic leader concluded, he discouraged members of his community from taking up positions in parish leadership. “I’d prefer to keep our energy inside the community for now,” he admitted. “Very few of our community join parish organizations.”³¹ Those

²⁹ “Report on National Liaison Conference Held at the College of Steubenville, Ohio”

³⁰ Ralph Lane Jr., “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement in the United States: A Reconsideration,” *Social Compass*, XXV (1978/1): 23-35; See also, Keane, “Formal Organization and Charisma in a Catholic Pentecostal Community,” 66

³¹ Rebecca Larsen, “Local Charismatic Renewal Group Largest in West,” Box 15, Folder 1, ROG, UNDA

associated with the WOG, therefore, tended to endorse a Charismatic Movement separated from the Catholic parishes.

Such a viewpoint stood at odds with that of other Charismatic leaders. Geraets, for example, spoke with longing for the unification of the Movement and the parish. “There will come a day when you can go into parishes and prophecy will be manifested, healing will be manifested, all the gifts will be manifested,” he dreamed.³² Fr. Ralph Tichenor, S.J., put forth this point even more forcefully. An early leader of the prayer group at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, Tichenor emphasized the place of the Charismatic Renewal within the Catholic parish. “Since there are many parts of the world which have not seen the vision as we have seen it here,” he wrote excitedly in *Catholic Charismatic*, “I feel that we can clarify our vision by simply speaking about *what* is happening here and *how* it is happening.” This vision involved not a community separate from the parish, but one fully integrated into its life. Prayer groups in Southern California, he explained, were largely individualized and almost entirely under the guidance of local priests. They stimulated parish life rather than distracting from it, holding the majority of their meetings within each church itself. After a description of these groups and their very loose association through the Southern California Renewal Communities umbrella, Tichenor concluded with an ultimate evaluation of the Movement in general. “The aim of a Charismatic community is, or should be,” he declared, “a blend of the Charismatic and the sacramental, and there is no better place for this blend than within the parish.”³³ Just as

³² Mary Ann Jahr, “The First Pentecostal Abbey,” *New Covenant*, May 1974

³³ Ralph Tichenor, S.J., “Renewal in L.A.,” *Catholic Charismatic*, 2:7 (April/May 1972): 37-41

with the relevance of culture for Charismatic life, national leaders split over the structure and focus of Charismatic groups.

Disagreements likewise erupted over the national structure and uniformity of the Renewal. Those attached to the Midwestern covenant communities typically discouraged regional get-togethers, preferring national and international gatherings instead. Part of this, explained James Byrne, had to do with resources. “I think that a multiplicity of conference in the West would be a bad thing and would drain money and cause people confusion about which ones to go to,” he wrote to Kerry Koller about the stirrings of an Albuquerque conference in 1972.³⁴ Byrne also wrote derisively about the attitude of prayer groups in Los Angeles. “There was much heated feeling from L.A. group against the development of a power structure, monolithic thought and teaching,” his notes read. “[They] felt that any group could then set themselves up as the authority and power of the renewal.”³⁵ Such an attitude, though misguided, kept the Southern Charismatic Renewal Communities (SCRC) from coordinating with more experienced organizations like CRS.

This quest for national coordination led the leaders of the National Service Committee to actively work against the success of regional conferences. “In some instances,” reported a group of ecclesial observers, “the National Service Committee either through members of the committee individually or through others brought pressure to bear that some conferences should not be allowed to take place.” Such actions had reduced the attendance at regional conferences in Louisiana and New Mexico, as key groups withheld

³⁴ Letter from Jim Byrne to Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Harvey, 17 Aug 1972

³⁵ “So. Calif,” 20 Aug 1972

their support and funds. The NSC, the group continued, had completely stopped another gathering in Denver by claiming that all of the teachings had to meet its approval beforehand.³⁶ Efforts of various California leaders, as well, had brought the SCRC into closer alignment with the National Service Committee. Together, with Byrne's encouragement, they helped oust Joyce Seiver from the leadership of the Orange County Renewal Committee, the most influential group in Los Angeles. Seiver had been steadfastly committed to a "So. Cal way of doing things" and therefore very resistant to national direction.³⁷ With her out of the picture, the City of Angels covenant community became the guiding force of the SCRC by 1976. Formally affiliated with the WOG, this West Coast group worked to implement CRS teachings within the organization's conferences and newsletters, hoping to bring it more in line with national trends.

These machinations were thwarted, however, in the coming years by those in favor of regional diversity. A tectonic shift had occurred with the SCRC by November 1977. Working together, opponents of the City of Angels passed a resolution that only diocesan or parish-based groups could hold leadership positions within their organization. This action toppled the newly ascendant covenant Charismatics, as their group was unaffiliated with the Church formally. While still keeping advisory positions open for covenant members, this new rule returned the control of the SCRC to parish-based prayer groups.³⁸ Local groups continued organizing regional conferences, as well, defying the efforts of the

³⁶ "Report on National Liaison Conference Held at the College of Steubenville, Ohio"

³⁷ "Re: The Real Situation in the West: Kerry's Report on the W. Coast Scene"; "Meeting of Kerry Koller, Jerry and Claire Harvey, Jim Byrne & Companions, San Diego"

³⁸ Scorsone, "Authority, Conflict, and Integration," 80; CC Tichenor, S.J., "Renewal in L.A."

National Service Committee. New Mexican Charismatics, for example, elected Abbot Geraets to plan a gathering for May 1975. Located in Glorieta, NM, the assemblage drew close to three thousand participants, including the Bishop of Albuquerque. The conference, once started, continued yearly through at least 1988. This was just the beginning of Charismatic gatherings in the West, however, with others popping up in El Paso, Denver, Phoenix, etc.³⁹ In this way, the enthusiasm of local groups thwarted the larger goals of national leaders.

Other forces aligned themselves against the WOG and POP vision of the Movement. Cardinal Leo Suenens, the chief Vatican liaison with the International Charismatic Renewal, seems to have distanced himself from the two communities by the late 1970s. Suenens, initially, had been a vocal supporter of Steve Clark, Ralph Martin, Kevin Ranaghan, and the formation of covenant communities more generally. He defended Renewal vocally in the accusations against True House in 1975, decrying such “a grave lack of justice and charity...to reveal to a large public the weaknesses of some of (the movement’s) members, thus creating a general bad impression of the [C]harismatic [R]enewal in the States.”⁴⁰ By this time, however, he appeared to already be having doubts about the place of covenant communities in the Renewal. Suenens had come into conflict with Martin and Clark over their nondenominational emphasis; this was, in his mind,

³⁹ Paul DeBlassey, “Early Days of the Albuquerque Renewal,” talk given at the Catholic Charismatic Center, Albuquerque, NM, 1 Jan 2015, http://asfcc.org/documents/2015/1/01_The_Early_Days_of_the_Abq_Renewal.mp3; *Pecos Benedictine*, Jan, July 1975, Oct 1976

⁴⁰ “Whither Charismatics?” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 15 Aug 1975

supposed to be the *Catholic Charismatic Renewal*.⁴¹ This distance only increased as time passed. In 1975, the Cardinal had invited Clark and Martin to spend the year in Brussels working for the International Renewal. According to one source, however, the true purpose of the trip was to prepare the WOG leaders for ordination (the celibate Clark to the priesthood and married Martin to the diaconate), thereby tying the group into the formal Church hierarchy. Possibly because of the growing pessimism and combativeness of the covenanted group, Suenens decided to forgo the ordination plan. Though never announced publically, this process helps illustrate the growing distance between the WOG and its Catholic roots, especially its relationship to the Catholic hierarchy.⁴²

Catholic clergy, as well, expressed their general displeasure with the direction of the Renewal. The most visible of actions involved the creation of the *Catholic Charismatic* magazine. The clerical forces of the Renewal, in association with Paulist Press, banded together to offer an alternative perspective to *New Covenant*. The first issue ran in 1976, featuring articles by Movement figures like Abbot David Geraets, Fr. Richard Roh, Fr. Donald Gelpi, and others. Though openly labeling the magazine “not as competition, but as complementary” to *New Covenant*, the intent was quite clear. These priests, nuns, and brothers were attempting to promote a vision of the Renewal with more attention to the “breadth and depth [of] Catholic tradition.”⁴³ Running for four years (1976-1980), the magazine did just that. *Catholic Charismatic* focused on issues generally neglected by the

⁴¹ Scorsone, “Authority, Conflict, and Integration,” 53

⁴² *Ibid.*, 62, 74

⁴³ *Catholic Charismatic*, vol 1, no. 1 (March/April 1976): 1; Joseph Lange, “A Special Letter to All Catholic Charismatics,” undated, Box 29, Folder 10, Rose Eileen Masterson Collection, UNDA

WOG, such as debates over the ordination of women. Catholic authorities seemed to agree with this overall thrust, as Cardinal Suenens reportedly had placed his own representatives on the board of *Catholic Charismatic*, signifying his greater approval of this vision for the Renewal.⁴⁴ The magazine yet against testified to the growing resistance of other groups against the hegemony of the conservative covenant communities.

Fr. John Haughey's speech to an assembly of East Coast Charismatics in 1977 represented perhaps the highpoint of this dissent. "Does Jesus have in His mind that some in the Church should be so bonded to one another in love and to Him, so transformed by Him through the bonds that obtain between them," the Jesuit priest questioned his audience of predominantly lay Charismatics, "that in effect they cease to live in the culture they have grown up in and begin to create their own culture?" This was not a hypothetical question, he argued, but a conundrum relevant to the present day. Haughey believed the Renewal stood at a "crossroads," a point of decision. On the one hand, he explained, it could accept the Martin-Clark vision of Ann Arbor. Charismatics could choose to band together, creating their own customs and culture. Their life would be ordered and their commands clear; they would be "acting with a single heart and mind" within a Church and world so divided by "pluralism and individualism." They would not just sit back and wait for Satan, but lead the assault, "do[ing] valiant battle against the forces of evil and turn them back

⁴⁴ Scorsone, "Authority, Conflict, and Integration," 74

and defeat them in the name of Christ and His Church.”⁴⁵ It would be heroic and spectacular, Haughey conceded, but would it be right?

A second vision of the Renewal existed, the priest explained, one much more in line with the emphasis of Vatican II. Rather than shutting itself off from society, it would see God’s presence in all that he had made. It’s goal would be to “stay very much a part of the human enterprise [it found itself] in, in all its ambiguity, and try to leaven [society] with the sweetness of Jesus’ goodness and truth.” It would be inclusive, but not necessarily heroic. After all, this second perspective knew that Christ had already won the victory; there was no need for armies or bulwarks to survive.

Ultimately, the Jesuit priest argued in true academic fashion, both of these visions were essential for the Renewal. The two visions were irreparably opposed, he acknowledged. “Christianity in the first would be seen as creating its own culture and affecting all other cultures from a position of discontinuity from them,” the Charismatic clergyman detailed. “The second position would be, in effect, that all cultures are meant to become more and more themselves and yet increasingly leavened *pari passu* by the presence of Christ through the believers who live in them and remain very much a part of them.” Yet, despite this difference emphasis, the two approaches were trying to answer the same fundamental question. It was a balancing act, he explained, trying “to be salt never losing one’s savor and at the same time to be leaven losing oneself in the dough of the wider social settings.” Rather than dividing according to one camp or the other,

⁴⁵ John C. Haughey, S.J., “Address to the 4th General Assembly of East Coast Charismatics,” Oct 22, 1977, Woodstock Theological Center, Box 2, Folder 1, Adrian and Marie Reimers Collection [hereafter referred to as REI], UNDA

Charismatics needed to celebrate this diversity of opinion. The Martin/Clark vision would give the Renewal its fervor, whereas the second approach would give it its understanding. The two visions worked only in tandem, in opposition, “just as certainly as the Trinity itself is an irreducible tension of opposites.” Haughey ended with a final plea for Charismatics to tolerate this multiplicity of visions. “Differentiation without love produces division,” he contended. “Differentiation with love produces an increasingly richer harvest.”⁴⁶

Such a proclamation, even though affirming the value of the covenant community approach to the Renewal, infuriated prominent members of the WOG. *New Covenant* reprinted Haughey’s evaluation shortly after its delivery, along with a rebuttal by Steve Clark. Attempting to address some “misimpressions” given by the address, the WOG leader began defending the approach of his community. He disputed claims of elitism and detachment from the world, but general agreed with the pessimism towards the world. “Christians can expect less and less support from society,” he explained.

The increasing incidence of premarital and extramarital sex, the legalization of abortion, the continued progress of ideologies and movements that are not based on Christian principles and values...all these things point to an increasingly difficult situations for the church....[If] we simply greet this actual world with open arms and affirm its goodness, without taking stock of the very real and sobering challenge it presents to Christian life, then we are not dealing with the real world, by only some idea of it. Christians need to assess the actual situation and prepare for the future.⁴⁷

Clark used the opportunity to clarify his own vision and that of the WOG, but this explanation speaks to a deeper dissatisfaction with Haughey’s address. Perhaps what was most maddening to Clark and his community was not necessarily Haughey’s portrayal, but

⁴⁶ Ibid; John Haughey, “Salt or Leaven?” *New Covenant* (June 1978)

⁴⁷ Salerno, “A Rhetorical Assessment of the Catholic Pentecostal Movement,” 264

his lack of finality. He, like the priests of *Catholic Charismatic* or the regional conferences, were doing their best to promote diversity and discussion in a Movement that should be characterized by direction and discipline. They were missing the point, engaging in academic discussions when the enemy was fast approaching the gate. Such a prominent and blatant challenge to the single-minded vision of the WOG, in addition to other factors, seemed to have greenlit a new chapter in the national Renewal.

“LEAV[ING] OTHERS TO THE LORD”: THE ABANDONMENT OF NATIONAL STRUCTURES AND ASSOCIATIONS OF LIKE-MINDED COMMUNITIES

The WOG and POP began to distance themselves from the national Renewal in the late 1970s, instead promoting an association of covenant communities. The two communities withdrew their support from the National Service Committee in 1978, primarily through the reorganization of Charismatic Renewal Services. The two leaderships changed the operation into a mail-order catalogue, ensuring that the majority of the profits from Servant Publications, *New Covenant*, and various conferences stayed in-house, rather than going to an increasingly challenged national organization. Such a defection greatly diminished the financial stability of the NSC, which in turn affected its ability to support new ministries and sponsor national conferences. The once profitable operation was now running a deficit and dependent upon donations.⁴⁸ The WOG and POP appeared to be done supporting an organization that had failed to produce unity in the

⁴⁸ Scorsone, “Authority, Conflict, and Integration,” 87; Salerno, “A Rhetorical Assessment of the Catholic Pentecostal Movement,” 260-270; “A Report to the Members of the Advisory Committee on the Restructuring of Charismatic Renewal Services,” Sept 17, 1974, Box 14, Folder 2, ROG, UNDA; Jim Lackey, “National Charismatic Center Launches Fund Appeal,” *National Catholic News Service*, July 6, 1979; Judith Tydings, “Women in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal,” 26 Aug 2010, Box 1, Folder 84, Judith Church Tydings Papers [hereafter referred to as JCT], UNDA

Renewal. This financial coup, as well, brought profit more directly to the communities of Ann Arbor and South Bend, enabling them to undertake more ambitious community-building ventures.⁴⁹ They acceded to the emphasis on diversity within the Renewal.

Though a withdrawal ultimately from the national sphere, it signaled a growing emphasis on the Martin-Clark vision. The Midwestern Charismatic communities had, since their inception, promoted not only the formation of other covenant groups, but also their connection. The outlines of a broader covenant system had begun appearing by 1974. An association of communities had developed between the WOG, POP, Servants of the Light (Minneapolis), the Work of Christ (Lansing), and the Lamb of God (Maryland), with potential expansion planned into Steubenville, Dallas, Newark, NJ, Augusta, GA, Dublin, Brussels, Beirut, etc.⁵⁰ The reason for this larger grouping was simple, Ann Arbor leader Steve Clark explained in 1976. Just as individuals got into trouble by themselves, Ann Arbor leader Steve Clark explained in 1976, communities needed a “community of communities” to safeguard them in difficult times and guide them through growing pains.⁵¹ Fr. Michael Scanlan of the Steubenville Charismatics echoed this call for unity in 1976, urging weaker groups to attach themselves to larger covenant communities for protection and direction.⁵² This coalition developed in two related ways. In some cases, individuals or even whole communities moved themselves into more established groups. One hundred

⁴⁹ “Charismatics Find a Home,” *South Bend Tribune*, 7 Aug 1977; David Hulen, “Charismatics Drive ‘Big Business,’” *South Bend Tribune*, 7 Aug 1977

⁵⁰ Scorsone, “Authority, Conflict, and Integration,” 92

⁵¹ National Communications Office Newsletter, Sept-Oct 1977, Box 4, Folder 26, ROG, UNDA; Stephen Clark, *Building Christian Communities: Strategy for Renewing the Church* (1972), 73

⁵² “Clergy Urged to be Involved with Catholic Charismatics,” *Washington Post*, 4 June 1976

and fifty North Dakotans had moved from Fargo to Minneapolis in 1977, simply to be part of the Servants of the Light; one hundred and forty transplanted themselves from San Francisco to South Bend for similar reasons.⁵³ Other communities lobbied for more formal relationship while remaining in place. They banded together in a loose coalition, headed by one of the Midwestern giants. Such was the beginning of covenant community networks.

Simple association would not be enough for Clark and Martin. Their band formalized itself into the Sword of the Spirit (SOS) in 1982, establishing a rigidly hierarchical structure. Just as there existed a hierarchy and headship amongst individuals living in community, a parallel system governed relationships between communities. The WOG stood at the center and Steve Clark served as its head, holding the power to fraternally correct groups in Steubenville, Minneapolis, Nicaragua, Maryland, Miami, Costa Rica, etc. Through the direction of the WOG, in fact, other covenant communities began implementing the Michigan communities infamous “Training Course” in their own Charismatic groups. This set of teachings, in addition to the oversight the WOG maintained over these communities, brought the MOG, Servants, etc. into closer alignment with Ann Arbor doctrinally and pastorally, not just organizationally. By 1987, this coalition encompassed some 7600 adult Charismatics and had member communities throughout the world. This association was not just Catholic, but ecumenical as it accepted

⁵³ National Communications Office Newsletter, Sept-Oct 1977; “Charismatics Find a Home”

members of various faith traditions.⁵⁴ The SOS, in this way, represented the major evangelization undertaken by the WOG and explains how many of its ideas became so prevalent in other, associated covenant communities.

This grouping of covenant communities, however, was not without conflict. Serious divisions erupted between the association of covenant Charismatics in 1981. Fed up with the militaristic and millenarian tone of the WOG, the People of Praise distanced itself from the Sword of the Spirit. Though maintaining rigid structure and hierarchy, it adopted a more optimistic tone and pursued a closer relationship with the Catholic Church. The South Bend Charismatics eventually formed a rival federation of covenant communities, totaling some 3500 people by 1987.⁵⁵ In other cases, this rivalry blossomed into open rebellion, such as with the Community of God's Delight in Dallas, TX. The group's leader Bobbie Cavnar, remembered his son Chris Cavnar, "expressed...disdain for the Sword of the Spirit." The Dallas-based community actively worked against the vision of the SOS, promoting a Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenant Communities and Fellowships instead. Though drawing much smaller numbers of people, the group eventually included Charismatics from Arizona, California, Kansas, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, France, and New Zealand.⁵⁶ These two groups, therefore, worked to promote an

⁵⁴ "Word of God Repents," *Ann Arbor Observer*, Feb 1991; Csordas, *Language, Charisma, Creativity*, 87; "There Is Life After Community or Why I Left," 15 April 1991, Four Letters from Former Members, accessed 3 Mar 2016 at <https://es.scribd.com/doc/20729466/Four-Letters-from-Former-Members>

⁵⁵ Adrian Reimers, "Charismatic Covenant Community: A Failed Promise," *Fidelity*, vol 5, No. 6 (May 1986): 30-40; Thomas Rausch, S.J., *Radical Christian Communities* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990), 181; Crowe, *Pentecostal Unity*, 102

⁵⁶ Letter from Chris Cavnar to John Flaherty, May 26, 1992, accessed at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/87364193/Community-of-God-s-Delight-Actively-Worked-Against-the-Sword-of-the-Spirit-1992>

alternative vision of even covenant community life within the broader Renewal. Such work, when coupled with the decline of national Renewal structures and the growing prominence of non-covenanted groups like Pecos, New Jerusalem (Cincinnati, OH), and the Community of God's Love (Rutherford, NJ), made the Renewal a thing of diversity not uniformity.

Later national events reflected this fact. Whereas the 1977 International Charismatic Conference might have been the fulfillment of Byrne's vision, the 1990 version would prove its antithesis. The 1990 International Charismatic Conference in Indianapolis was a complete disaster. Though planning for over 50,000 participants, the gathering only attracted some 14,000 people initially. This paled in comparison with the 60,000 brought in by the 1977 version, and even the 40,000 drawn by its 1987 counterpart. Desperate pleas and discounts raised the number to around 25,000, still less than half the expected total. Where had the Charismatics gone? Many were simply busy with their own regional events or covenant associations; others did not see the necessity of attending national-level events. Such listlessness derailed the conference, as well as the efforts of the National Service Committee to become relevant once again in Charismatic life. Instead of raising its profile and turning a profit, the gathering instead generated a deficit of over \$600,000. Charismatic speakers, rather than providing quality teachings, instead spent most of their time appealing for funds for the conference, just to erase the debt incurred by under-attendance.⁵⁷ This turn of events most visibly illustrated the declining national

⁵⁷ Kevin Ranaghan, "1990 Congress Was a Call to Maturity," *New Heaven/New Earth*, Oct 1990, 14-15, 22

profile of the Renewal. Absent the work and funds of the two most influential covenant communities in Ann Arbor and South Bend, the National Service Committee had become a shell of its former self, as had its conferences. Charismatics seemed content more to focus on their local issues, instead of charting national directions. The battle for hegemony had ended, and the WOG/POP had lost. Its vision failed to hold sway over the national Renewal, only attracting a few influential communities to join in its covenant associations. The struggle for influence, however, had only just begun.

CHAPTER 8: DEVILRY OR DISCERNMENT: *THE BATTLE FOR INFLUENCE OVER THE BROADER RENEWAL*

C.S. Lovett's *Unequally Yoked Wives* offers a fascinating and disturbing insight into female submission. Written for "Christian women with unsaved mates," the book offered "a plan for turning all of [a woman's] testings, abuses and sufferings around and using them for the salvation of [her husband]."¹ Lovett's book revolves around the oft-quoted 1 Corinthians 7:14. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by his wife," the Good Book declares, "and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by her believing husband." Such a passage, the Rev. Lovett explained, meant that "the wife is called to be a 'sanctifier' of her husband. That's what Paul is saying," he continued. "Of all people she is the one God uses BEST for reaching that man."² Over the course of the next few chapters, Lovett restates this conclusion various ways. "[The verse] makes a Christian wife who is married to an unsaved man," he proclaimed, "**a special agent for God!**....Christian wife, you are surely God's chosen servant....No one can reach that man more powerfully than you."³ The Christian minister concluded his exultation of womankind in the same vein, this time emphasizing the need for a proper strategy for such a grand task. "You bet it is fascinating," he celebrated. "It's thrilling. And the more so when you have a definite plan for working with the Holy Spirit," he hinted. "Wouldn't you like to be able to squeeze your husband's soul...**in the power of God!**" he questioned his audience hypothetically.⁴

¹ C.S. Lovett, *Unequally Yoked Wives* (Baldwin Park, CA: Personal Christianity, 1968), 8

² Ibid, 9

³ Ibid. 34-35, emphasis in original

⁴ Ibid., 37, emphasis in original

With his audience presumably eager for the task ahead, Lovett launched into his description of his unfortunately (or very aptly) named “Nutcracker Technique.” “Take a walnut,” he invited his female audience. “Now pick up the nutcracker. Insert the walnut and squeeze. **‘Craccck!’** That’s the way to deal with an unsaved husband. Put him in the nutcracker and squeeze,” he concluded simply.⁵ With his incredibly suggestive overview over with, Lovett then proceeded into a more detailed look into this “Christian” technique. The nutcracker hinged on the intersection of “Works” and “Light.” A woman should work to please her husband as much as possible, he advised his female readers. This might involve a little extra time setting the table, perhaps with a special placemat or napkins, or a special meal or an extra effort to look beautiful. One could even try and lose a little weight. Even proper coffee might do the trick, Lovett admitted, as men appreciated the real stuff over the easier-to-make instant variety. As her husband noticed and appreciated these changes, Lovett explained, he would be drawn under the first lever of the nutcracker. “See what is happening?,” he exclaimed. “You could work one specific after another until you had yourself in shape as a sharp looking woman. But that is only a by-product. As each improvement brings forth a comment from your husband, you use it to squeeze the nutcracker a little more.”⁶ A woman worked the “Light” handle of the nutcracker by attributing these changes to Christ. She should credit Christ for this new attitude, her new spirit of submission to her husband. This dual approach, both pleasing her man and bringing in Christ, would complete the technique.

⁵ Ibid., 38

⁶ Ibid., 53, 64

The nutcracker, unsurprisingly, had particular applications in the bedroom. Lovett advised the Christian woman to put forth extra effort in the bedroom as well, all for the glory of Christ. “Any Christian who fails to please her husband sexually...[and] fails to let her light shine in that area,” he admonished, “fails not only her husband, but her Lord.” Lovett added such a spiritual significance to the sexual act because of the potential he saw for bringing a man to Christ. “As delicately as I can say it,” he continued, “I am suggesting that you deliberately help your husband soak in sexual satisfaction and then—**with equal force**—let him know he owes his pleasure to Christ.” “Dear wife,” he concluded, “this is a powerful technique. The Holy Spirit is able to use this mightily when it is done sweetly and in His strength.”⁷ Such a book, though certainly on the strange side, spoke to the opinions of conservative Evangelicals in American during the 1960s and 70s.

What relevance, one might ask, would such a book have amongst Charismatic Catholics? Very little, one would assume. Such a viewpoint, after, seemed to contradict many of the Movement’s most cherished principles. Charismatics celebrated their new unity in Christ, recognizing the words of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:28. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus,” he declared. This attitude seemed to inform many aspects of Charismatic life. They accepted neither divisions of denomination nor the strictures of liturgy, instead celebrating the freedom and equality that had come with the

⁷ Ibid., 57, 59, emphasis in original

arrival of the Spirit.⁸ Indeed, even gender roles were no match for the excitement of the Holy Spirit. In the early years of the Renewal, Steve Clark recalled fondly, the WOG very quickly abandoned traditional styles of singing. Spurning men's and women's parts, they sang all the words together, joining in praise and in the Spirit.⁹ Few in the community, one could imagine, would support the strict division of man and wife promoted by Lovett.

Flying in the face of these expectations, however, *Unequally Yoked Wives* appeared to enjoy great success in Charismatic circles, as evidenced by advertisements in *New Covenant* and its presence in the personal book collections of Movement leaders. How had Charismatics come to read and appreciate such a book, particularly one that separated believers so starkly from each other? The Word of God covenant group, in addition to its allied communities and despite the opposition of other forces within the Renewal, together promoted fundamentalist interpretations of Scripture, opposition to secular culture, and more conservative gender roles.

INTRINSIC VERSUS SITUATIONAL HOLINESS: PERSPECTIVES ON TONGUES, BIBLICAL LITERALISM, AND MODERN CULTURE

Through their controlling positions in the Renewal, the National Service Committee, Charismatic Renewal Services, and *New Covenant*, the most prominent prayer groups of the Midwest pushed for a special appreciation of the gift of tongues. Of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, this was the most adored. "The harmonies...floated in every

⁸ "'Charismatics' Gain in Churches: 'Charismatic Renewal' is Flourishing," *New York Times*, 8 Sept 1974; "Pentecostals Celebrate Belief in Atmosphere of Love, Unity," *Catholic Tower*, 11 Dec 1970; "Love: Jesus People at Georgetown," *Georgetown Hoya*, 13 Oct 1972

⁹ Stephen Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980), ix

direction,” wrote Movement stalwart John Flaherty of the “ancient, mysterious beauty-speak.” “We described it as being in the presence of God. I look back and think that maybe we were,” he gushed.¹⁰ A similar admiration of tongues ran through *The Team Manual for Life in the Spirit Seminars*. Produced by the WOG to help induct newcomers into the Renewal, these teachings reached hundreds of thousands of people domestically and internationally, shaping perceptions of how the Movement should look.¹¹ This booklet presented a particularly positive view of tongues, casting it as the “gateway to the Charismatic experience.” “Tongues may not be of first importance in itself,” it admitted, “but it has great consequences in a person’s spiritual life.” By giving in to tongues, the guide continued, the individual believer gained a “clear experience of what it means to have the Holy Spirit work through him—and experience of him being fully active and yet the Holy Spirit forming something new through him.”¹² This and similar statements placed tongues unquestioningly at the heart of the Charismatic Renewal. The *Life and the Spirit* seminars presented such a viewpoint not only in its teachings, however, but also through its teachers. All instructors, it explained, should have experienced tongues for themselves; only with personal appreciation of the gift could they guide others to “the full life of the Spirit.”¹³ Thus, through explicit instructions and role models, these seminars emphasized

¹⁰ John Flaherty, “Death of a Prayer Meeting,” last updated 2011, accessed 15 Nov 2015, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/51097723/Death-Of-A-Prayer-Meeting>

¹¹ “Charismatic Communities,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, 12 Sept 1975; Stephen Clark, ed., *Team Manual for the Life in the Spirit Seminars* (Notre Dame, IN: Charismatic Renewal Services, 1972), foreward

¹² Clark, *Team Manual for the Life in the Spirit Seminars*, 88

¹³ *Ibid.*, 15

the importance of tongues in the Renewal, implying their indispensability to the true Charismatic life.

Clerical groups within the Renewal, however, generally displayed a more nuanced understanding of the spiritual gifts, tongues especially. “Tongues could be a hysterical experience, or, according to some, a diabolical one,” warned Jesuit priest Donald Merrifield, emphasizing the outcome rather than the process. “Peace, joy, and charity are the essence of the experience,” he cautioned those who might delve into tongues unquestioningly.¹⁴ Other clergy members offered similar evaluations of the Charismatic gifts. Carmelite priest Vernard Poslusney emphasized the importance of tongues, but not for its own sake. “Judging by its spiritual effects,” he detailed, “this personal encounter with the Lord...[is] a temporary experience of infused contemplation given...for different reasons. Its purpose might be to introduce a person...into contemplative prayer, or perhaps to enable another to break...with a severe habit of sin involving drugs, alcohol, sex, hatred, scrupulosity, etc.”¹⁵ Fr. Edward O’Connor echoed this viewpoint. Tongues were an undeniable gift from God, he explained, “shaking us up, dissolving our previous patterns and outlook, giving us a new vision, reorientation our lives.” Yet, he cautioned against loving such an experience for what it was in itself. “When the clapping of hands and the shouting of Hallelujah become an effort to stir up an exuberance that is no longer there,” he warned, “it has a terrible hollowness, like the cosmetics by which an aging woman tries

¹⁴ “‘Tongues’ as Proof of Holy Spirit Doubted: Loyola University President Says True Signs Are in Transformation of One’s Life,” *Los Angeles Times*, 15 Jul 1972

¹⁵ Vernard Poslusney, O. Carm., *Attaining Spiritual Maturity for Contemplation: According to St. John of the Cross* (Locust Valley, NY: Living Flame Press, 1973), 1

to cling to the appearances of her vanishing youth.” Charismatics could do the same thing, he believed, by attaching themselves to firmly to the emotional release of tongues. Doing so would make them no better than Peter at the Transfiguration, attempting to hold onto something beautiful that was not for this world. “Charismatic power, joy, harmony and experience have a real value in fostering this life,” he concluded, “but when they are sought for their own sake, or cherished as dominant values, they deform and inhibit [this life].”¹⁶

Pecos advocated the same mix of desire and detachment. Pecos stalwart Jim Scully balked at the way in which “many people mistakenly equate[d] Pentecostalism with speaking in tongues.” “Pentecostals seek the fullness of life in the Spirit of Jesus,” he declared in 1979. “This embraces all the activities of the Spirit that we find in the Scriptures, including the spiritual gifts. One of these is tongues.” His conclusion echoed that of Poslusney and O’Connor. “Wonderful though [the gifts] may be,” he advised, “they must lead to higher things—the fruits of the Spirit.”¹⁷ Jungian Episcopalian Morton Kelsey likewise discouraged over-attachment to any experience of this life. “Wholeness is tasted for a moment and then becomes a goal, the end to be sought in life and finally found, hopefully, in the next life,” he admonished. “It is a *way*, not a safe harbor at the end of a journey.”¹⁸

¹⁶ Edward O’Connor, “When the Clouds of Glory Dissipate,” *New Catholic World* (Nov/Dec 1974)

¹⁷ Charles A. Fracchia, *Living Together Alone: The New American Monasticism* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 127

¹⁸ Morton Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity: In Ancient Thought and Modern Times* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 335. See also, Teresa del Monte Sol, “Pentecostalism and the Doctrine of Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross,” *Spiritual Life*, 17, no. 1 (Spring 1971): 21-33 and Eddie Ensley, “Contemplation: The Challenge and the Possibility,” in *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, edited by Paul Hinnebusch, (New York: Paulist Press, 1986): 76-97

Geraets' own view paralleled that of his mentor. The Charismatic gifts were tools like any others, he explained to an audience of lay believers in California in 1981: fundamentally value-neutral. Just as a hammer could be used to build a house or smash a skull, so the gifts could be used for good or for evil. The Abbot offered the example of a divining rod to illustrate this principle. One could use the divining rod to help others, finding water in the desert perhaps. Yet, one could also use it for the "profit motive," looking for oil or other minerals. Spiritual forces were aiding the rod in either case, he cautioned his listeners, but the outcome would help them see from whence those spirits came. In this way, Geraets and other clerics warned against accepting these gifts as fundamentally good in themselves, but instead approaching the issue with some discernment, i.e. practical wisdom.¹⁹

A comparable divide existed in the way that these two groups read and interpreted the Christian Bible. Covenant communities, noted sociologist-priest Fr. Joseph Fichter, endorsed a perplexing view of the Scriptures. Though celebrating the "liberalizing 'tendency' of spontaneity and enthusiasm" in their worship, they tended to adopt a rigid "fundamentalism in Biblical morality and practices."²⁰ WOG Steve Clark attempted to explain this viewpoint in his tome-like *Man and Woman in Christ*. "Christianity is based on the recognition of God speaking in the words of men," he pointed out matter-of-factly. If Charismatics were to trust that God could speak to believers today, that Jesus was a real and personable presence in their lives, how much more shocking was it to believe that He

¹⁹ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, "Discernment of Paranormal Experiences," 1981, talk given at Southern California Renewal Communities Conference, Van Nuys, CA [hereafter referred to as SCRC]

²⁰ Joseph Fichter, "How It Looks to a Social Scientist," *New Catholic World*, Nov/Dec 1974: 244-248

could work through the equally human writers of the Bible? Clark blasted those who treated the apostles solely as “early Christian thinkers, limited men like all other men.” He worried that modern Biblical criticism was undermining the foundation of Christianity, using the “gap of centuries” and attention to cultural biases to justify the “offhand dismissal of...scripture and tradition” and ignore the fundamental duty of “submission to the Lord.” “The Lord is probably more pleased with someone who makes a foolish mistake in attempting to obey scripture than with someone who requires that everything be proved beyond a shadow of a doubt before considering obedience,” he reasoned.²¹ This privileging of faith over reason, in many ways, mirrored the covenant communities’ treatment of the Charismatic gifts. The Good Book was thought to be fundamentally good in itself, naturally predisposed towards leading believers to holiness.

Pecos and its associates adopted the opposite approach, preferring to err on the side of reason. Morton Kelsey pleaded eloquently for an “intelligent religiosity.” “Jesus came to save us from our sins, lostness, and confusion,” Episcopalian priest rationalized, “not to save us from thinking.”²² Abbot Geraets echoed this appeal. “When everything is all black or all white there is no gray matter,” he quipped characteristically. “It’s simplistic and it would be nice,” he admitted of interpretation, “but it isn’t that easy. The world isn’t that simple.”²³ Geraets repeated such opinions throughout his prolific speaking career, feeling it his duty to educate those in the Charismatic Renewal against fundamentalism. “[Jesus]

²¹ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, xi, 331, 333, 345, 551

²² Kelsey, *Christo-Psychology*, 6

²³ Geraets, “Discernment of Paranormal Experiences”

died to take away your sins, not your head,” he proclaimed in 1988.²⁴ At times, the Benedictine Abbot moved beyond simple exhortations and into open ridicule of those who took Scripture too literally. It was certainly important not to be “an educated infidel,” he conceded in a 1981 presentation, but equally important not to be somebody’s fool. Fundamentalist interpretations of Scripture were openly ridiculous, he explained, something akin to worrying about security at a baseball game because so many people were “stealing the base[s].”²⁵ The Abbot believed such a rigid faith was fundamentally immature, a concept he illustrated with a different presentation on the star announcing Jesus’ birth. “I know when I was young, I believed it was a real physical star,” he admitted. He could not understand, however, those who persisted in such a belief, “try[ing] to make it into a super nova” or otherwise “do[ing] all kinds of these various gymnastics.” If the symbolic interpretation made so much more sense, he reasoned, it was childish to insist upon the literal one.²⁶ Thus, the interpretation of Scripture split the Charismatic ranks just as much as the proper treatment of the gifts of the Spirit, with covenant communities tending to represent one extreme and various clerical forces the other.

This disjuncture appeared in how these groups talked about outside culture, as well. Fr. Geraets had long believed in the inherent dignity of nature and culture. “For the mystic and artist, God permeates and transforms all reality,” Geraets wrote in his 1967 doctoral dissertation. “He brings everything into harmony, unifying all experiences (sensual,

²⁴ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Vision Quest: Tell Your Story,” 1988, SCRC

²⁵ Abbot David Geraets, “Discerning Visions and Revelations,” 1981, SCRC

²⁶ Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., “Catechesis and Charismatic Renewal I,” undated, School for Spiritual Directors Binder 2014, Our Lady of Guadalupe Benedictine Monastery, Pecos, New Mexico.

emotional, intellectual, religious), giving meaning and coherence to all.”²⁷ The Benedictine embraced the things of this world, seeing them as ways through which God brought man to Himself. This emphasis appeared throughout the monk’s career as a preacher and teacher. The incarnation, he explained in a talk to the Southern California Renewal Communities, was what made Christianity distinct from Eastern religions. Whereas philosophies like Buddhism and Hinduism talked about detachment and *nirvana* (i.e. escaping this life), Jesus Christ had come down to earth himself. This action, he concluded, meant that Christians had to take the material world seriously; it too had been redeemed by Christ.²⁸

Indeed, such an attitude pervaded the Pecos monastery, as it sought to use cultural practices to help believers better approach God. Such practices were never meant to replace the good news of the Gospel, they believed, only to give it a new vibrancy, like a new melody enlivening old lyrics. The monks justified a variety of practices with this reasoning, making modern diet plans, exercise regimes, and even architectural styles part of their life together. Perhaps the strangest of their adventures involved a short-term adoption of eurhythm. A study of the art of movement, eurhythm hopes to make the invisible visible (music through motion) and, through that, lift mankind’s attention to higher realities. Sister Paul Van Horn hoped to use this practice to aid healing and emotional knowledge of God. “Only with such a background for the objective essence of speech and music, can one be free enough to give full experience to the Spirit’s

²⁷ David Geraets, *The Role of Music in the Missionary Catechetical Apostolate* (Benet Lake: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1968), 38, 41

²⁸ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Charismatic Prayer and Spirituality,” 1979, SCRC

promptings,” the *Pecos Benedictine Newsletter* reasoned.²⁹ Such a positive assessment, however, mentioned nothing of eurhythmy’s dubious origins in the early 1900s. Linked to anthroposophy and official condemned by the Catholic Church, the practice was anything but value-neutral.³⁰ Yet, that mattered not to the brothers and sisters of Pecos. If they saw practical value in anything, whether that be eurhythmy or Jungian psychology, they would use it to advance the kingdom of God.

This approach contrasted sharply with that of the WOG and other covenant groups. More so than the monks at Pecos, these leaders emphasized the power of environment in shaping social mores and Christian morality. “Christians who do not receive active character formation do not simply express their individuality,” warned WOG theorist Steve Clark. “Instead they are formed (for the most part unconsciously) by the dominant social influences around them rather than by someone who has Christian wisdom about how people should be formed.”³¹ Such influence, he contended, would inevitably lead to the corruption of belief and practice. Clark issued frequent proclamations to this effect, worrying about the future of the faith. “The salt is not succeeding in salting the earth; it is in danger of losing its savor,” he declared in 1977. “Catholics are rarely evangelizing the world; too often, they are being evangelized by it.”³² These fears of engaging with the world, therefore, led covenant groups not to engage the world, but rather insulate themselves from it.

²⁹ *Pecos Benedictine*, Oct 1973

³⁰ Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J., “Anthroposophy,” Real Presence Association, last updated 1998, accessed 14 Mar 2016, http://www.therealpresence.org/archives/Protestantism/Protestantism_008.htm

³¹ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 632

³² Steve Clark, “The Christian and the World,” *New Covenant*, June 1978

Charismatic communities achieved this by emphasizing the dangers of secular philosophies and practices. Professors at Franciscan University of Steubenville, the nation's first avowedly Charismatic institution of higher learning, expressed their frustration with their student body. All too often, they explained, undergraduates would stuff their ears upon any mention of Marx or Freud or at the very least start murmuring prayers to ward off evil spirits. "If I had to roll it all together," professor and priest Fr. Paul Walker summarized, "there was an undue concern that everything be clear, no shades of gray."³³

Yoga most visibly illustrated this concern. Leaders railed about the hidden effects of the practice in the pages of *New Covenant*. "It is not just a value-neutral physical exercise," explained F. Laggard Smith of yoga in 1989. It's steeped in philosophical, if not religious significance." Such philosophical underpinnings, he explained, were dangerous even if they were not consciously taught. "The analogy is not exactly parallel, but participating in yoga without being caught up in its ultimate purpose would be something akin to being baptized without relating it to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection." Smith concluded with similar words. "Whatever else it may be," he broadcast to thousands of Charismatics, "yoga is a mystical practice tied to the occult."³⁴ This, among other articles and teachings, helped promote a vision of the Renewal that emphasized the suspicion of modern culture.

³³ Kevin McLaughlin, "At U. of Steubenville, Theology is a Factor in Every Class," *Religious News Service*, 14 Jan 1987

³⁴ See, for example, F. Laggard Smith, "New Age Prayer," *New Covenant* (June 1989)

By and large, Charismatic participants seemed to agree with these messages. Their tendencies particularly irritated the organizers of the Monastic Interreligious Dialogue of the 1980s. Trying to bring together Buddhist and Catholic monks for cross-cultural sharing experiences, clerical figures worried especially about the Charismatic reaction. Friar Charlie Murphy recounted with horror the story of a Christian yoga retreat picketed by Charismatics. “[They] passed out leaflets to the participants as they entered to the effect that Yoga is a cult and the work of the devil,” he recalled. The protest took a turn for the worse, however, as few seemed to be paying attention to the flyers. “They verbally abused the participants, in a most unchristian way,” bringing one of the woman participants” to tears. Though this woman decided to leave, the monk related, “it was necessary for her...to depart by the rear entrance of the church for fear of passing through the crowd of screaming charismatics, some of whom were Catholic, sad to say.”³⁵ Based on this experience, he recommended that the Vatican send out statements to *New Covenant* and various covenant groups, hoping that they could moderate the open hatred of Charismatics for anything Eastern.

Steve Clark also singled out a philosophy particularly rampant in American life: individualism. “Many in the world hold up the ideal of independence of judgement and diversity of viewpoint,” he proclaimed, “but in doing so they betray the fact that they are committed to individualism and not to genuine community.” The WOG leader believed that the Bible called Christians to something beyond individual fulfillment, “a unity of

³⁵ Letter from Friar Charlie Murphy, SA, to Sister Pascaline Coff, O.S.B., Oct 22, 1980, Box 4, Folder 6, Monastic Interreligious Dialogue Collection, UNDA

mind and heart.” “They therefore place a lower value on developing an individuality of approach or a more correct opinion,” he elaborated, “than they do on coming to a oneness of understanding with the Christian community they are part of and on living the same truth together with their brothers and sisters.”³⁶ Philosophies like this only pulled Christians further from the truth of their faith, the Charismatic layman held. As such, they needed to be avoided as much as possible through the formation of Christian community. In this way, the hatred of culture informed the development of covenant communities.

Those at Pecos took issue with such a pessimistic take on modern society. Serious problems existed in the world today, Geraets admitted, ranging from ecology to pornography. This would have been cause for despair, if not for the Resurrection. “One who is a Christian,” he proclaimed, “must believe that no matter how bad it may look there was the victory in Jesus Christ. The whole book of Revelations....is not a book about impending disasters...[but] a theological statement that no matter how bad things are Jesus is Lord and Satan or Caesar is not Lord.”³⁷ The Abbot reiterated such concerns in an article about Charismatic prophecy, which could be interpreted as a direct challenge to the apocalyptic messages emerging from the WOG and other covenant groups. “To focus only on the negative part of mere condemnation would constitute at least an implicit denial of the resurrection,” he explained. “Anticipated joy of the resurrection (a gift of the Holy Spirit to his Church) can turn our death and dying into a positive experience.” This

³⁶ Stephen B. Clark, ed., *Patterns of Christian Community: A Statement of Community Order* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1984)27-28

³⁷ Abbot David Geraets, “Healing and Gospel Renewal,” 1997 and “Charismatic Prayer and Spirituality,” 1979, SCRC

viewpoint was important not only theologically, he argued, but emotionally as well. “The story must necessarily have a happy ending or else life becomes a tragedy,” he concluded. “Without hope, living becomes meaningless and eventually hopeless....without this hope, God’s people perish.”³⁸ In this way, those at Pecos and those in covenant community fundamentally disagreed about the goodness of modern culture. Just as with Scripture or the Charismatic gifts, these debates revolved around whether things were holy/unholy in themselves or in their application.

Such musings were especially visible in community attitudes towards the practice of psychology. Depth psychology and dream analysis, Pecos affiliate Jim Scully believed, could not be condemned out of hand. This, like other aspects of secular wisdom, needed to be “weigh[ed]...in the light of God’s revelation to discover what might assist us in our Christian life.”³⁹ Jungian psychology appeared to help one’s spiritual life. Most of the evil in this world, the monks believed, was due to unconsciousness, not wickedness. Abbot Geraets explained as such in an article about inner healing. People rarely chose to commit evil actions; often they were just seeking fulfillment in the wrong ways. “When a person is without [divine] love,” he explained, “he/she is capable of performing the most atrocious actions in an attempt to fill the deep cavernous vacuum within himself.”⁴⁰ Psychology, by helping identify and come to terms with such desires, would prevent such tragic floundering. It would do so, moreover, in a way that overly strict Christianity could not.

³⁸ David Geraets, “Prophecy: Gloom or Bloom,” *Catholic Charismatic*, vol 2, no. 4 (Oct/Nov 1977): 14-17

³⁹ *Pecos Benedictine*, Oct 1988

⁴⁰ David Geraets, “Pentecostalism in Trinitarian Perspective,” *Catholic Charismatic*, vol 1, no. 1 (March/April 1976): 16-21; Kelsey, *Caring*, 175

Long lists of rules and regulations might lead only to further estrangement, a denial of the parts of the self that led to bad things. People needed to be able to exist in tension. They needed to acknowledge their own duality, seeking better integration, but never perfection.⁴¹

Despite their confidence, the monastic community emphasized the limitations of Jungian psychology. Just like any other tool, Geraets believed, the merits of psychology depended on its use. He loudly professed his support of Catholicism. “Whenever there’s a difference between Jung and Christianity,” he declared in 2003, “I opt out for Christianity.” The Abbot openly rebuked those who would use dream analysis and depth psychology for things other than the spiritual journey. “The end of this world is not self-actualization,” he proclaimed, “[nor] even to be a fully integrated and whole person.” Greater than physical or mental or emotional sickness, the monastic explained, “the greatest evil upon the face of the earth is to lack God-consciousness.” God permitted out physical maladies and emotional issues to exist now and “until the end of times” so that “in and through it we may come to know God in some instances when we would never turn to him otherwise. And that’s why just having it together is not enough.” The Abbot concluded forcefully and provocatively. “What is the good of self-knowledge if you don’t know what to do with it?” he questioned his audience rhetorically, pointing to the necessity of Christianity even in his promotion of psychology.⁴²

Interestingly enough, this question was almost identical to those posed by more conservative covenant communities. “[It all] boils down to the issue of discernment,”

⁴¹ Geraets, “Vision Quest”; William J. Sneek, S.J., “Jung’s Impact on Christian Spirituality,” *Human Development*, Vol 12, No. 4 (Winter 1991): 5-11

⁴² Abbot David Geraets, “Discernment from Dreams,” 1981, SCRC

wrote one *New Covenant* contributor of Jungian psychology and Pecos in particular. “Truth is truth wherever it is found,” the Nick Cavnar of the Community of God’s Delight admitted, “[and] whatever is true in Jungian psychology can be adapted and used by Christians.” He did offer one important concession to this approval, however. “Those who turn to Jung for insight into the spiritual life,” he explained, “must also be prepared—both intellectually and spiritually—to distinguish where his ideas fall short of the truth revealed to us in scripture and Christian tradition.”⁴³ Dorothy Ranaghan of the POP offered similar warnings, emphasizing the limits of the Jungian perspective. “Unless one grows in charity,” she detailed,

...the most authentic, self-discovered, psychologically healthy and integrated person on earth might go to hell....The highest possible sanctity is nonetheless possible for the disintegrated, or even downright neurotic individual whose love of God and neighbor sets him or her apart as one who aims not at psychological perfection, but at the height of perfection which is love. Such a person is holy with the holiness of God who is Love.⁴⁴

These admonitions, almost identical to those issued by Pecos itself, illustrate the general agreement of Charismatics on the subject of Jung. His perspective certainly offered spiritual insight, they concurred, but certainly posed dangers to the believer as well.

Prominent covenant leaders clearly saw some value in psychology. POP member Bert Ghezzi published a number of books teaching Charismatics how to deal with their emotions, with titles ranging from *The Angry Christian: How to Control, and Use, Your Anger* to *Facing Your Feelings: How to Get Your Emotions to Work for You*. He passed along commonsense advice to his brothers, such as advising against repressing anger. It

⁴³ Nick Cavnar, “Dreaming with Jung,” *New Covenant* (Sept 1985)

⁴⁴ Dorothy Ranaghan, *A Closer Look at the Enneagram* (South Bend, IN: Greenlawn, 1989), 28

was far better, he advised, to express it in the proper sphere and with the right technique than to have it dominate one's life.⁴⁵ Other Charismatic writers spoke of the value of dreams, such as Evangelical Leanne Payne. These nightly visions, she explained in *The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer*, made people aware of their repressed thoughts and desires. Though cautioning against an explicitly Jungian framework, Payne also emphasized the divine origins of dreams, explaining that they often spoke to the "heart of God."⁴⁶ Even Steve Clark, notoriously hostile to the secular sciences, utilized psychological studies to show the fundamental differences between men and women.⁴⁷ These people found some use in the discipline.

Despite this agreement over the value of psychology, however, Charismatics stressed the dangers of the discipline much more heavily. Martin and Sally Lynch offered a skeptical assessment of New Age prayer and Jungian tendencies in 1989. Certain people could find truth in the midst of non-Christian practices, they admitted, but those people were a rarity. If it took an Aquinas to tame Aristotelian thought, what chance would the average believer have with Jung? "Without such a background of internalized 'Catholic correctives' upon which the grace of discernment can build," they cautioned, "the sincere seeker of spiritual progress could well find his view of creation and the Creator subtly but significantly distorted."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ For more details, see Bert Ghezzi, *The Angry Christian: How to Control and Use Your Anger* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980)

⁴⁶ Leanne Payne, *The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1981), 176-179; See also, F. LaGard Smith, *Crystal Lies: Choices in the New Age* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1989), 120-131

⁴⁷ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 410

⁴⁸ Martin and Sally Lynch, "The Right Questions about New Age Prayer," *New Covenant* (June 1989)

Such wariness was not unique to the Lynchs. WOG member Kevin Perrota presented a similarly bleak assessment of delving into the unconscious mind. While sympathizing with those looking for ways to “respond to God more fully, especially as he makes himself present...in ways that go deeper than rational consciousness,” he could not approve of their actions. “The irony is that Jungianism may help them become less conformed to God and more conformed to the secular culture,” he explained. “For what are the characteristics of the secular culture if not self-absorption and self-reliance, a diminished sense of sin and a desire for independence, a glorification of sexual pleasure and a denial of moral absolutes?”⁴⁹ F. Lagard Smith warned similarly of New-Age dream interpretation in his own *New Covenant* article in 1989. “Virtually always,” he wrote conspiratorially, “there is a residue of truth involved in deception—just enough to entice us. Just the right amount to confuse us. Just one step beyond where it seems safe.”⁵⁰ These evaluations and exhortations illustrated the general distaste with which covenant communities viewed Jungian psychology. While potentially valuable, the process of self-discovery and discernment was similar to gambling. The rewards were great, but so was the probability of losing everything

Much of this opposition revolved around psychology’s origins. As a secular science, they reasoned, dream analysis could only dilute the potency of the Gospel. “Jung’s apparent sympathy for religion is an insidious trap for the unwary,” warned Fr. George Koterski, “and is probably worse for Christianity than Freud’s open hostility.” The priest

⁴⁹ Kevin Perrota, “Probing the Unconscious: Is the Journey Worth the Risks?” *New Covenant* (Dec 1988)

⁵⁰ Smith, “New Age Prayer”

cautioned believers against trusting its vision of God, an impotent and flawed caricature of the great I AM. “God is defined in terms of man, not the converse, and the result of this man-centered anthropology is (in the words of James Hellman) ‘a polytheism of consciousness,’” he wrote in frustration.⁵¹ Kevin Perrota agreed with Koteriski’s assessment. With God located somewhere in the ether of our collective subconscious, he admonished, “practicing the presence of God can become indistinguishable from merely paying attention to oneself.” In this sense, he continued, the self could become a god, with people following their own desires and wishes, leaving “little room” for the “notion” of obligation or devotion.⁵² Like all other forms of secular wisdom, it was a dangerous distortion of the truth, one designed by Satan to lead believers astray.

An exchange between People of Praise coordinator Paul DeCelles and an unidentified POP member illustrated how these beliefs functioned in community. “Counseling, as it is commonly practiced today,” Decelles stated in a newsletter, “differs from pastoral care both in its goals and in its methods.” The former did help people, he admitted, especially with problems of “the present age” (alcoholism, addiction, and anxiety). It gave no thought, however, of “the life to come.” Social workers and counselors, he noted, avoided statements about “truth and error, right and wrong, either to guide the person or to evaluate his decisions.” Such a viewpoint contrasted with pastoral care, which dared to be “sometimes directive, instructive and corrective, though...never coercive.” DeCelles worried about the long-term effects of counseling. “By focusing

⁵¹ Joseph Koterski, S.J., “C.G. Jung and the Temptations to Rationalism.” *Dawson Newsletter*, 6, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 1-5

⁵² Kevin Perrota, “Probing the Unconscious: Is the Journey Worth the Risks?” *New Covenant* (Dec 1988)

entirely on the here-and-now,” he elaborated, “counseling can skew a person’s perspective on the truth and value of that eternal perspective,” particularly on issues like lust. Based on these reservations, DeCelles recommended members of the POP to only seek pastoral care. “Good pastoral care will solve the same problems—I mean problems such as alcoholism and the rest—without any of the negative side effects that often come with counselling,” he concluded.⁵³ Given the power of elders within covenanted communities, such a recommendation carried real weight, effectively prohibiting counseling for members.

This open dismissal of psychology prompted debate within the community. One covenanted Charismatic, only identifying him/herself as a Christian social worker, challenged DeCelles’ perceptions. “If we were called to be angels,” the opening salvo read, “then perhaps good pastoral care would be enough.” The science of counseling, however, spoke to the brokenness of the human condition, especially when dealing with addictions. “I believe in miracles and the power of prayer,” the member granted, “[but] I also have worked with addicts and know they need medical attention and counselors and pastoral care to help them.” The letter begged DeCelles to reconsider his ban on psychology. “Once again,” the anonymous Charismatic concluded, “we are spiritual, physical and emotional beings. To deny or ignore any part of ourselves as humans, we would be missing out on part of our calling as humans and on part of the balance which

⁵³ “For the Record: An Interview with Overall Coordinator Paul DeCelles,” *Vine and Branches*, November 1989, Box 1, Folder 42, Adrian and Marie Reimers Collection [hereafter known as REI], UNDA

Christ exemplified so well for us.”⁵⁴ While speaking to the diversity of opinion within covenant communities, such a plea highlighted covenant hostility toward psychology. It, unlike pastoral counseling, did not have the proper end in sight: the glory of heaven.

What made Jungian psychology especially despised, however, were not its presuppositions about God or eternal life, but rather its premises regarding man. Jungian psychology had a flawed view of human nature, according to an article by Kevin Perrota and Leanne Payne in *New Covenant*. It viewed man and his desires as basically good; it believed man would be fulfilled if only he listened to the wisdom of his heart. Such optimism was not just misguided, the authors believed, but potentially harmful. “The error here is in thinking that the evil in fallen human nature is confined to one level, while in fact evil now infects human nature from top to bottom,” they wrote pessimistically. Such a condition affected “not only...our conscious reason,” but also “our aspirations to wholeness and the imaginative, intuitive, emotional, and symbolic faculties arising from the unconscious.” No holy center existed, the Charismatics concluded, nothing “has been preserved from original sin,” the authors concluded. Because of this evil in the heart of man, human inclination could not be trusted; it would lead to sin, and not salvation. Payne and Perrota spoke openly to this fact, declaring that,

It is folly to identify God’s vision for human life with the drives and images of the unredeemed human heart. If, before the fall, in the state of pristine union with God, man could look into his heart and find there only the brightness of God reflected in the unflawed mirror that God had made him to be, then perhaps he would have done well simply to be true to the promptings of his heart. But no longer.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ “Letter to Paul DeCelles from Unidentified Community Member,” Nov 14, 1989, Box 1, Folder 42, REI, UNDA

⁵⁵ Leanne Payne and Kevin Perrota, “The Unconscious Confusion of Christian Jungianism,” *Pastoral Review* (April 1988): 3-6 and (May 1988): 3-6

Thus, covenant communities seemed to emphasize the fall of man over the image of God. They suspected any philosophy, and especially a non-Christian one, that would dare to trust human nature.

This suspicion extended even to the Pecos model of community. In contrast to covenant communities, Pecos adopted a basically optimistic outlook on the spiritual life. The Abbot acknowledged this disjuncture when speaking of Charismatic “deliverance” ministry. “I do not have any problem with deliverance,” he proclaimed of spiritual warfare, “[only] a great deal of problems with deliverance ministry.” It was “almost satirical,” he continued, to think of Jesus sitting someone down for a lengthy exorcism; the King of Kings had simply renounced the demons and went on his way. “I figure if you give primetime to the Lord there won’t be too much room for the other one,” he concluded.⁵⁶ This perspective on the Devil made Pecos approach the world less suspiciously. Satan was not hiding behind every corner, waiting to lure a believer into traps and snares.⁵⁷

As such, Pecos believed that it could trust the discernment of individuals, so long as they listened to the divine spark inside of themselves. This was the point, after all, of Pecos’ approach to community. Though most prospective applicants to their monastic community left, Pecos welcomed everyone to come and try out the life. “We build in a temporary vocation here,” the Abbot explained, a place where “someone can contribute a few years of their life, and at the same time, be formed, be healed in community.”⁵⁸ He

⁵⁶ Geraets, “Discerning Visions and Revelations”

⁵⁷ Sneek, S.J., “Jung’s Impact on Christian Spirituality”

⁵⁸ Abbot David Geraets, O.S.B., “Basic Spirituality IV,” undated, School for Spiritual Directors Binder 2014, Our Lady of Guadalupe Benedictine Monastery, Pecos, New Mexico.

held no resentment against those who left, instead seeing the time as mutually beneficial for the community and the individual.⁵⁹ After all, he reasoned, time at Pecos was preparing one for a full engagement with the world, equipping them with the tools of discernment necessary for maintaining one's faith in everyday life. Psychology served as one of these tools, meant to allow believers to better hear the word of God.

Ann Arbor's Word of God, however, disagreed vehemently with such an assessment. This was the point of its collective discernment, a process meant to shepherd the believer through a world of snares and Demonic intrigue. Being part of the community was an indispensable aspect of the Christian life, not a revolving door. "[Membership in the group was] considered as binding as the sacraments of Baptism, Matrimony, or Holy Orders," recalled former POP member John Ferrone.⁶⁰ The community actively discouraged people from leaving. With such an active approach to demonology, those that left, going out to submerge themselves in modern culture, would stand no chance.⁶¹ The optimism and pessimism with which they viewed the world of man and the world beyond, therefore, had great ramifications for how each group viewed and lived out the spiritual life.

These premises affected even the way that the communities approached listening to each other. Episcopalian priest Morton Kelsey saw the process of getting to know someone almost as a sacred experience. "Sometimes when I have listened deeply to

⁵⁹ Ed Moreno, "Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism," *The Telegraph*, 7 Dec 1987; Sam Atwood, "Spiritual Pioneers: Men and Women Share Charismatic Monastic Life," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 15 June 1986

⁶⁰ John Ferrone, "Why the Promise Failed," *Fidelity*, June 1986, 7-8

⁶¹ "Word of God Repents," *Ann Arbor Observer*, Feb 1991

another,” he explained, “I have the same sense of awe as when I am alone in the church at night and the votive lights flicker against the arched windows.” This was not just two people talking, but “a holy place,” he concluded, one where he had “communed with the heart of Being itself.”⁶² Not everyone could see this radiance. Often, he conceded, it was hidden behind a “veil” of “demonic darkness.” It was always there, however. “Beyond the darkness of the soul lies a beauty we never dreamed existed in this mortal world. In this deepest level of the human psyche, we discover the spirit of the living Christ, the Holy Spirit, the shekinah or glorious blaze of the father,” the Jungian wrote loftily.⁶³ In this, the Episcopalian with ties to Pecos emphasized the divine origins of mankind, emphasizing the fact that, in listening to another, he was listening for the heartbeat of God incarnate in the natural world.

The Mother of God community in Gaithersburg, MD, on the other hand, trained its members to listen critically, not reverentially. When greeting newcomers, the group explained to hospitality ministers, they needed to probe for information. The community even provided a handy “Information Gathering” form to facilitate the process. The sheet urged members to inquire about all aspects of a visitor’s life, ranging from family relationships, job, school, current living situation, aspiration, religious background, dating status, etc. Such detail had spiritual importance, the form explained, offering two examples as proof. “John entered the Growing In Faith seminar,” the first began.

He is about 30 years old. During a telephone conversation with John his buddy picked up on John's mention of taking his daughter horseback riding every weekend. John's buddy recalled that John doesn't wear a wedding ring. Now his

⁶² Kelsey, *Caring*, 84

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 83

buddy has two clues to the fact that John might be separated or divorced. This further led to the discovery that John was very unstable, and later he brought up the fact that he was a member of AA.

The second proceeded upon similar lines, only this time about a newcomer named Sue.

Sue had been in the Growing In Faith seminar for a few weeks. When she and her buddy went out for a bite to eat one evening, Sue mentioned that she can't eat most of the things on the menu -- her stomach can't take it. Sue's buddy remembered how Sue often seems nervous and uneasy. Maybe Sue has an ulcer? A few tactful questions revealed a whole history of nervousness related problems and a not-so-hot family background.

Information gathering was important, the sheet summarized, because it helped identify any “tremendous impediment[s] to the individual’s growth and provided clues about how fast they could be moved along in the formation process.”⁶⁴

Such methods of listening differed fundamentally in their aims. Kelsey listened to perceive the divinity in people, whereas the MOG listened to perceive their flaws. The strategies again spoke to divergent understandings of human nature. Kelsey, like the monks of Pecos, presumed that people were fundamentally good. It may have taken a bit of time and effort to see through the sinfulness of everyday people, but, at the very core, there lay that beautiful Shekinah light. The MOG tried to come to know people deeply, but presumed that evil was lurking underneath the outer appearance of good. They listened to try and uncover a person’s hidden faults and failings, worried that the majority of people could not be trusted in their own spiritual journey.

⁶⁴ “Information Gathering,” Washington Post Magazine, last updated 13 April 1997, accessed 15 Feb 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/library/mog/documents/gather.htm>

“[BETTER] THE WAY IT WAS WRITTEN”: GENDER COMPLEMENTARIANISM IN THE WOG AND AT PECOS

All of these factors informed the communities’ respective approaches to sexuality and gender roles. Those in covenant communities, thinking back to their disdain for modern culture, believed that men and women needed special training to re-inhabit their Biblical roles. Community structures reflected this belief, as did the structure of the home, with women always in a subservient role to men. Women took care of children in marriage and in community, freeing their husbands to fulfill their roles as providers for the family. This arrangement, Steve Clark explained, would be mutually beneficial to the sexes, leading to the “full restoration of men and women’s roles.”⁶⁵ Such an arrangement was only possible separate from the world and the influences that led people to sin.

Covenant leaders, after all, well understood the confusion of modern society. The looked out upon the feminists and liberationists with pity as well as disdain.⁶⁶ Their promotion of total equality for the sexes, while well intentioned, was ultimately misguided, at least according to Steve Clark. Such a position, he believed, completely overlooked the beauty that might be seen in diversity, the ways in which men and women could truly complement each other. He offered a personal example from his Ann Arbor community to illustrate this fact. At first, the Charismatics leader explained, he and the other members of the WOG had insisted on singing all parts of their songs together, so confident were they that the Spirit had arrived to break down the barriers between all people, even men and

⁶⁵ Clark, *Patterns of Christian Community*, 15, 23

⁶⁶ “Charismatics V: What Tapes Tell about Sex Roles, Healing, Prophecy,” *The National Catholic Reporter*, Sept 19, 1975; “Charismatic Movement Leans to Women’s Role,” *The Dallas Morning News*, Mar 4, 1978

women. The change brought greater solidarity, he admitted, but at the cost of beauty. “At one point...we began to sing some of these songs the way they were originally written [for men and for women],” Clark remembered. “When we did this, the consensus was that something worthwhile had been added to our ability to sing and worship the Lord. In fact, most people were enthusiastic about the new dimension of beauty and expression that had been added to our life together.” This process of praising the Lord together but distinctly, Clark maintained, illustrated something fundamental about the roles of the sexes. “Men and women should live together in love and serve the Lord together,” he began.

Most of what they should be doing is the same. But as we learn how to perceive and draw upon the value of what is distinctive to men and to women, our life together becomes stronger and more beautiful. There is something worthwhile about women for which men cannot substitute, and vice versa. When we live our life together as Christians ‘the way it was written,’ it becomes better.⁶⁷

The diversity, he concluded, could not be lost, even in the service of equality. Only together, in complementary and appropriate roles, could men and women most fully bring glory to God.

Appropriate roles were not the only thing necessary to save society, but also appropriate relationships. Ralph Martin worried about the state of men and women in a culture so heavily dominated by Encounter groups and EST seminars. Though emotional openness was good, he explained, it also ignored important boundaries that needed to remain in place. “‘Christian love’...unfortunately, bears more relationship to *eros* than *agape*,” he explained, “and this not uncommonly between people with commitments that make this kind of relationship inappropriate.” Martin equated such over-intimacy with

⁶⁷ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, ix

“spiritual adultery,” if not the physical variety. “Married women and priests, priests and nuns, nuns and married men, and all kinds of other combinations, enter into relationships of intimacy and ‘sharing’ which develop a dependency and possessiveness, a showing of ‘affection’ and a secrecy, which has already entered into the realm of the erotic.”⁶⁸ True Christians, the WOG held, maintained a respectful distance unless in appropriate relationship. What was intimacy without boundaries, he asked, and how did it differ from emotional dependency? These questions were the inspiration of many of the regulations of the WOG, ranging from the strict division of the sexes to dating and even community authority. All hoped to solve the crisis of sexuality assaulting modern American society.

The monks of Pecos, as well, fretted about the relationship between the sexes. They were worried not so much with inappropriate relation, however, as with no relations at all. In contrast to the norm of religious life, they promoted men and women living together. “Certain negative aspects of communities, either of all men or all women, are lessened in a mixed community,” explained Sister Mary Jo Mcenany of the Pecos vision. “The women become less petty and the men become softer. The sensitivity of women to pain, loneliness, and unhappiness makes community life less harsh for men; and men are able to lessen the tendency of women to focus on the foibles of other women. Certainly, the women in this community have helped to bring out the gentleness in men.”⁶⁹ Men of the community also commented on the beauty and value of having the two sexes together in one place. “A

⁶⁸ Ralph Martin, *Unless the Lord Build the House: The Church and the New Pentecost* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria, 1971), 37

⁶⁹ “A New Star: A Short History of the Abbey of Our Lady of Guadalupe Pecos, New Mexico,” 1973, Box 62, Folder 2, Religious Orders Printed Material, UNDA; Fracchia, *Living Together Alone*

‘balancing-out’ occurs in men-women relationships,” Fr. Ray Roh detailed, “whether that be a greater care in physical appearance, a deepened sensitivity in communication, or a heightened masculine-feminine consciousness.”⁷⁰ The contact between men and women added something valuable to their community, something lost in normal religious life.

The religious of Pecos hoped to bring such a message to the rest of the Charismatic Renewal. Abbot Geraets spoke freely about the problems of intimacy and affection in American society. So few men and women, he lamented, knew how to relate to each other “with a love that is warm yet chaste.” This problem became magnified within the context of celibacy. All too often, the Benedictine explained, nuns and priests dealt with the separation negatively, either becoming withdrawn or lustful.⁷¹ Though speaking of similar problems as the WOG, the Abbot differed fundamentally in his planned solution. Rather than isolating men and women, he advised bringing them closer together. “Separation simply does not safeguard chastity,” he warned.⁷² “Mature human relationships require frequent contact with other people,” he explained in another instance, exclaiming that, “without day-to-day personal interaction, it is all too easy to reduce either men or women to a sexual fantasy!”⁷³ Separation, based on his monastic experience, did not solve the underlying issues; separation, based on his Jungian beliefs, only made these underlying issues worse. The Abbot warned against dismissing *eros* out of hand. Sexual attraction, he elaborated, was a natural part of life, something that could not be swept under the rug

⁷⁰ Fr. Raymond Roh, OSB, “The Pecos Community: Pursuing Wholeness Together,” 1984, Box 62, Folder 2, Religious Orders Printed Material, UNDA

⁷¹ David Geraets, “Power in Pecos,” *Catholic Charismatic*, vol 2, no. 3 (Aug/Sept 1977): 20-23

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*; Moreno, “Progressive Monastery Tests Traditional Catholicism”

and forgotten. Instead, it had to be utilized, used to build strong and intimate relationships in community. Just like the Charismatic gifts or Scripture or psychology, therefore, sexual love depended on how it was used or abused.⁷⁴

These visions of love and sexuality, though both founded on ideas of gender complementarianism and fears of improper affections, prompted dissension between Pecos and lay covenant communities. Abbot Geraets explicitly criticized the covenant community model of keeping the sexes segregated. With such separation, he believed, “you can’t love a woman or a man in flesh and blood concretely. There’s so much fear there.”⁷⁵ He bristled, as well, at their emphasis on headship and submission and particular attention to the roles and privileges of the man. “I don’t think that models down with today, neither does the Holy Father,” he argued, implicitly dismissing their viewpoint as anti-Christian and anti-Catholic. “[The Pope] says the true model, when you take that Ephesians text, is Christ is head of the Family, and both husband and wife defer to the Christ. That’s the legitimate model today.”⁷⁶ Geraets instead emphasized a model of mutual friendship, in which man and woman would together balance out the inherent qualities in each.

Steve Clark and Kevin Perrota of the WOG displayed a similar antipathy towards the Pecos model of living together. The latter attacked Geraets and his fellow Jungian enthusiasts for their often “immoral advice regarding sex.” “One pair of authors,” he

⁷⁴ Abbot David Geraets, OSB, “Christian Initiation,” 1988, SCRC; Geraets, “Vision Quest”

⁷⁵ Geraets, “Vision Quest”

⁷⁶ Abbot David Geraets, “Basic Spirituality I,” undated, School for Spiritual Directors Binder 2014, Our Lady of Guadalupe Benedictine Monastery, Pecos, New Mexico.

detailed disgustedly, “recommend that men and women form opposite sex friendships to develop the erotic aspect of their personalities ‘despite the dangers,’ and do not absolutely close the door to sexual relationships for celibates, extramarital affairs, and homosexual liaisons.”⁷⁷ Close relationships between the sexes, Perrota maintained, could very well lead into sin, a possibility that Pecos and other Christian Jungians neglected to mention.

More than that, argued Steve Clark, it could lead to the perversion of proper gender roles. Though he appreciated Jung’s division of masculine (*animus*) and feminine (*anima*) traits, he warned against the psychologist’s emphasis on integration, balance, and wholeness. “The wisest approach is not to encourage people to articulate in their lives traits which are typical of the opposite sex,” he believed, “since that leads to the masculinization of women and feminization of men. Rather,” he explained, “people should be urged to express common human traits in a way which is characteristic of their sex. For example, a man ought to express compassion in a masculine way, rather than either repress it or express it in a womanly way.”⁷⁸ Part of this concern stemmed from Clark’s commitment to promoting Biblical relationships between the sexes. The advice of Jung flew in the face of Paul and, as such, could not be trusted. The majority of this antagonism, however, seemed to be related to the coming fears of spiritual warfare. While Clark worried about the effects of improper relations on womanhood, he focused especially on its threat to manhood. Excessive contact with women, he believed, would undercut the role of a man as a natural leader, making him more sentimental, subject to social approval,

⁷⁷ Perrota, “Probing the Unconscious”

⁷⁸ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 633

and overly gentle, and, ultimately, less capable of protecting his wife and children. The Christian world needed men, he believed, in order to survive the coming assault of the secular world. This concern with masculine purity led Clark to caution women against over-mothering their young boys and men against becoming too close to their wives. Men had to be men, and women had to be women to truly follow Christ. “Christian character is formed by correcting, as well as by strengthening, the natural lines of personality,” he summarized.⁷⁹ Clark thus declared his total opposition to the Jungian concepts of personality development so endorsed by Pecos.

In this way, concerns of community and society led covenant communities to endorse rigid gender roles. With the evils present in secular culture, covenant communities could only trust the words of the Bible, which advocated a secondary role for women. These ideas about gender, in addition to the hatred of psychology, became all the more necessary in the context of the coming struggle against the world. Yet, at the same time, these concepts placed the WOG and its associated covenant communities in opposition to Pecos, as the two battled for influence within the broader Renewal. This conflict paralleled disagreements over the intrinsic versus situational goodness of tongues, the Bible, modern culture, and especially modern psychology. In this way, the Renewal became a place of vibrant, though heated discussion. Local and regional gatherings proliferated and pursued their own track within the Renewal, signaling the overall victory of clerical and parish forces. The Charismatic Renewal was not something hierarchically structured from the national level, but rather something that showed great diversity and local emphases.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 634

EPILOGUE

These developments, though good for the diversity within the Renewal, spelled its doom as a national movement. Lacking a coherent structure or message, Catholic Charismatics split into mostly regional groups or covenant associations. Some would argue that this meant the Renewal had fulfilled its purpose, that it was no longer necessary to reinvigorate Catholicism. Others would lament the Movement's decline, noting the promise that it held to transform the Church in a greater and more lasting way. Regardless of these interpretations, one clear fact remains: the Charismatic Movement is practically invisible in the U.S. Catholic Church of today. Charismatic prayer groups exist, certainly, but their members rarely evangelize and their meetings are rarely advertised in the parish. It has become, in many ways, just one of the many devotions attached to a church, akin to family ministry or social justice. Certain segments of the Hispanic community are changing this (Latin American immigrants especially), but the Movement has largely ceased to be a motivating factor for the white, middle class, the people who it inspired in the 1970s.

The spirituality, however, remains alive and well. Whether seen through monthly healing masses on the diocesan level or frequent talk of a "personal relationship with Jesus" on the individual level, the Charismatic Movement has left a large imprint on American Catholicism. These legacies are especially prevalent in youth ministry, as many of the organizations (National Evangelization Team, Lifeteen, Steubenville) have Charismatic roots and, for Steubenville at least, explicitly Charismatic identities. Perhaps this is the future of the Charismatic Movement, at least among white Catholics: the

continuation of the spirituality with the decline of the Movement. This “post-Charismatic” identity seems to be most prevalent today, and could be seen in most aspects of Catholic life, whether in retreats, parish organizations, or even everyday spiritual language.

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